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**Kathie's Views.**

KATHIE'S  
PECULIAR VIEWS.

BY  
ADAH E. SMITH.

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PHILADELPHIA :  
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,  
1420 Chestnut Street.



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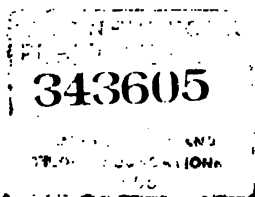
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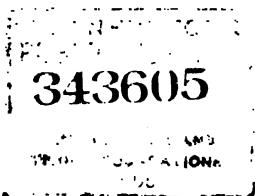
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# KATHIE'S PECULIAR VIEWS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *KATHIE FINDS HER WORK.*

**H**AVE you secured a teacher for either of those classes yet ?”

The question was asked by Dr. Irving, the pastor of the First Baptist Church, of his superintendent, Mr. Lythcombe. Teachers and scholars were all assembled, and it wanted just three minutes of one, the time appointed for the opening exercises.

“Have I? I wish I could say, yes; but I can't.”

Mr. Lythcombe's eyes wandered over to the corner near the door, where five bright looking boys were sitting, and back again to the corner next the platform, where as many girls were chatting in a half-audible tone, evidently crowding as much as possible into those three minutes.

"What do you propose to do?" the pastor inquired, with a sigh, his eyes following the direction of the superintendent's.

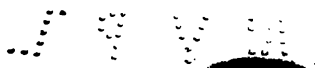
"I'll take the boys myself, to-day; and the girls? Don't you think you can prevail upon one of your scholars to take them, for once?"

"It is useless to ask again. You know I told them about these classes last Sunday, and earnestly solicited their help, but failed in getting it."

"Yes, I recollect. Well, the only way left is to scatter them among the other classes; and they don't like that."

Mr. Lythcombe struck the bell, and the pastor went to his own class.

It was an odd class, this Bible-class of the pastor. It contained more than fifty members, whose ages ranged from the girls and boys of fifteen, to the snowy-haired deacon of eighty. No matter what was the state of the weather, no matter how small the main school might be; nothing but sickness in a severe form kept the members of the class from their places. They loved Dr. Irving as a pastor, and they loved him as a teacher; and in the many ways that love can devise, they sought to help him in his work, ex-



cept in one thing: they could not, and would not, teach in the Sunday-school; and that was the very place in which they could have assisted him most.

The two classes to which reference has been made had been without teachers for five successive Sundays—their former teachers having gone to other fields. All the members of the Bible-class thought that teachers ought to be provided from their number; but notwithstanding their pastor had pleaded eloquently in their behalf, no one had yet seen fit to assume the responsibility. Some pleaded youth; others, old age; a few, domestic cares; and one, brown-eyed Kathie Danforth, simply said she had no good reason, unless peculiar views made one.

The sermon, this particular morning, had been a very earnest and searching one on duty; and the lesson for the afternoon was a continuation of the same subject. Both teacher and scholars were eager and interested, more ready than usual with questions and answers. Even those who seldom took part—this class compared favorably with others in this respect—offered suggestions that surprised themselves as well as their leader.

"I think we have passed a very profitable as well as pleasant hour," remarked the pastor, rising, as the sound of the superintendent's bell warned him that the time was over. "I will dismiss you with these words, which I desire each one to consider prayerfully and earnestly—'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'"

All through the week that had passed, that had been Kathie's prayer, and this morning the Lord had sent her his answer in the pastor's sermon. She had been the foremost with suggestions in the class; so Dr. Irving was not surprised, when at close of the session, she greeted him with:

"I'll trouble you for another text, Dr. Irving, as you gave me my answer to the one you just left with us in your sermon, this morning. I thank you for it, and for the talk we had about the same subject last Sunday. I'm ready—yes, and willing now to take a class; but my views, you know, are peculiar."

"So you stated during our talk; but never having had the pleasure of hearing them and judging for myself, I can't say. But, my child, I am very, very glad that you have found your work so soon; and rest assured Mr. Lythcombe

and I will do all we can to help you. Suppose we go to the desk now—I see Mr. Lythcombe is at leisure—and you can unfold those ‘peculiar views’ of yours to us.”

Kathie laughed.

“A teacher for one of those classes, Mr. Lythcombe. She will state her plans if you will spare us a few minutes.”

“Ah, Miss Kathie! Well, I hadn’t thought of you as a teacher. I thought——”

Mr. Lythcombe cut his sentence short, and looked the trim little figure up and down. Again Kathie laughed, and blushing slightly, said:

“You thought me still a child, I suppose; but it’s nine years since I wore pinafores.” The brown eyes that looked into his danced with mischief.

“Nine years since you wore the white one with the four-inch mud border? What a forlorn little Kathie you were that day! I dug you out of the mire.” Mr. Lythcombe smiled gravely. He never laughed now. “Ah, Kathie, how many changes have come to both of us since then!”

For a few moments all were silent, engaged with their own thoughts. The superintendent’s

eyes had a far away look in them, but it was only for an instant. Then he broke the silence.

"You are willing to take a class, Kathie? Well, I shall accept you gratefully, I assure you, both you and your views. Which of the classes do you prefer, the boys or girls?"

"I would like both."

"Both! Why, child, that would make four more pupils than any other teacher has; and, besides, a mixed class!"

"Yes, I know. You have mentioned two of my peculiarities, but I've thought it all over, and know it is just the kind of a class I wish. The girls will have a good influence upon the boys, and the boys the same over the girls."

"I like the idea; Philip, what do you say?" inquired Dr. Irving.

"Let Kathie try her way. If she succeeds, well; if she fails, she will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that she tried."

"Then, Mr. Lythcombe, I wish the class to be increased to at least twenty."

"Yes; what next?"

"I would like to sit where the boys do now."

"Yes."



"I wish you both to pray for my class before we leave the vestry."

Pastor and superintendent looked at each other, and then at Kathie, but neither spoke. They were too much astonished for words.

"And I wish you to do it every Sunday," continued Kathie. "I would not dare to undertake such a responsibility unless I felt sure of both your prayers. Before the lesson is announced, I would like one minute for prayer; and the same at the close of the lesson. In taking this class, I shall feel responsible for the salvation of each of its members. Each one will be as precious to me as my own soul; will be guarded as tenderly and as faithfully. I must have pledges too—total abstinence pledges—for each. I have various plans of work laid out which I will introduce as opportunity offers. I have prayed for guidance in my planning, and God has directed me; and through his help, and my own faithfulness and zeal, I expect these boys and girls to become thorough temperance Christians. May I try, Mr. Lythcombe?"

"You may try, Kathie, and may God bless your efforts."



"Amen," responded Dr. Irving, tremulously.

The three then knelt, and pastor and superintendent asked God's blessing to rest upon the efforts of this young disciple.

"Kathie," said Mr. Lythcombe, as they passed out together, "you may rely upon me for assistance in any plan that the cause of temperance may suggest to you. I'm all on fire upon that subject."

## CHAPTER II.

### *MR. LYTHCOMBE'S EARLY HISTORY.*

PHILIP, Elva, and Alden Lythcombe were the children of wealthy parents. The father was a weak Christian man, and the mother a worldly Christian woman. Mrs. Lythcombe, being the stronger of the two, always carried her point; hence Mr. Lythcombe's home was too often the scene of performances to which he decidedly objected, but had not the will to prevent. There were select dances and private theatricals and late suppers; for Elva, the beautiful, petted darling, who had just come out, was the belle of the season, and her mother's highest ambition was to wed her to a fortune.

Mr. Lythcombe was a total abstinence man; so of course people talked, and justly, when young men were seen coming staggering down the street from the Lythcombe mansion. And it was whispered that Alden had been brought home twice, too drunk to walk—fair-haired, blue-eyed Alden, only a boy of fifteen. Wine

was doing its work well; but the mother blindly shut her eyes, and would not see.

When Elva was eighteen, she wedded the man of her mother's choosing; and people called it a good match. Mr. Loring ridiculed the idea of total abstinence. He believed in moderation. Pledges were for drunkards and men who had no reason. It was simply absurd for a man who only took a glass of wine at dinner, and now and then with a friend, to bind himself to a pledge. In other words, it would be putting himself on a level with common drunkards. Thus Atwell Loring reasoned, when Elva, urged by her brother Philip, who was concerned for the young man's safety, asked him to join the society to which her father belonged. Mrs. Lythcombe and Alden both agreed with Atwell, and between the three they succeeded in convincing Elva that Philip was unduly cautious; and the man who could drink moderately, and still be himself, was as safe as the man who never touched liquor.

The wedding was the grandest affair of the season. The papers were full of it for a week. *Minute* descriptions were given of the elegance

of the parlors, the costumes, the flowers, the presents; but nothing was said about the quantity of rare old wine that the bridegroom consumed, nor the condition in which he was borne to his room long before the guests had departed. It was policy to leave that out.

Then it was that Philip Lythcombe, senior, asserted his rights for the first time in his life. There should be no more wine suppers in his house, and no more wine upon his side-board. Had he made that resolution a year before, his son might have been saved from a drunkard's grave, and his only daughter from marrying a drunkard. But, alas, it was too late! If Alden could not get wine at home, he could buy it at the tavern; and if Mr. Loring could not get it at his father-in-law's table, he could, and did, at his own.

The months lengthened into three years, during which both young men were speeding to ruin. Then came a crash. Atwell Loring was shot dead in a gambling saloon; and his broken-hearted wife, with her puny babe of six months, came home to die.

All that human skill could do to save both

was done, but in each case disease had advanced too far, and their decline was rapid. It was fall when they came home; and one day in early spring, crape fluttered from the door of the gay house upon the hill-side. A few hours later, a funeral procession wound slowly down the slope, through the avenue to the cemetery; and all that remained of Elva Loring and her child was put away forever from the sight of those who had loved them.

After Elva's death, Philip, with his wife and children, came home for awhile to cheer his parents, and to save Alden, if possible.

There was reason to hope; for since that terrible night, when he had seen his brother-in-law fall dead from a pistol shot from the hands of a companion in the Black Alley, Alden had not drunk a drop of any kind of intoxicating liquor. So Philip hoped and worked—I wish I could say he prayed, but I cannot, for he was not a praying man then—so he did all but that, and that was the one thing needful. Poor Philip!

The second summer after Elva's death, Philip purchased a fine sail-boat; and many pleasant

excursions were anticipated in visiting the numerous places bordering the lake.

"I'm sorry that I cannot have my vacation in July, as I expected," Philip remarked to his wife, one morning, at breakfast; "but Mr. Selvin's protracted illness renders it impossible until August, at the least. However, you must not give up your plans on my account, for Alden will be at home next week, with his chum, Dwight Wallace; and I mean they shall have a good time, now that we all are home together. You know we go West, in the fall, and years may pass before we spend another summer together in this dear old home. I wish you all to make the most of it now, and carry as many pleasant memories as possible to our new home."

"You may be sure that we'll do that, Philip," returned his wife, raising her smiling face to his; "for if Dr. Palmer's description of our new home is correct, we shall need to store away a vast amount of sunshine to endure it."

"It will be sunny enough with mamma's smile to make it bright; don't you think so, Ray, my boy?" inquired the fond father, tossing up his bright little four-year-old.

"That's so, papa; 'cause mamma is all sunshine, rainy days and all," said the child, laughing.

"Toss me up again, papa, and then make my head touch the ceiling."

Philip did as the little one requested, then kissing him fondly, set him upon the floor, and bidding good-bye to his wife and the baby girl in her arms, left the pleasant scenes of home for the less agreeable ones of the bank.

Philip Lythcombe was very proud of his wife and children, and loved them with all the devotion of his great heart; and they in turn were equally devoted to him. But not once, during the six years of his married life, had this husband and father thanked God for his treasure, or asked his blessing upon them. Not so with the wife and mother. Every morning she spent a little while with her Father, seeking his guidance for herself and little ones, and his blessing upon her husband. Every evening she knelt with the children, first listening to Raymond's little prayer, and then offering a petition for Baby Elva, who was too young to pray for herself.

The first week in July, Alden came home, accompanied by his friend, Dwight Wallace. Then the pleasures of the season began, and the house and grounds echoed and re-echoed with the laughter of the young people, and the shouts of little Ray. Even Baby Elva joined in the mirth, clapping her tiny hands, and screaming with all her strength. The weeks passed too quickly. The last day in July arrived before they were ready for it, and the following Monday, Dwight was to leave them.

"Philip's vacation will begin the day I leave, so you won't miss me much," Dwight said, when they were all wishing that he could stay through August. "I must have one more sail, though, upon that wondrous lake. Where shall it be, Philip? Alden said the last time we sailed, that we had visited all the places of importance that he knew of."

"Have you been to see the old Lingham grounds, upon the western shore of the lake?" inquired Philip. "If you have not, I would advise you to go to-day; for there is enough of the rare and beautiful there to repay you for the trouble."



"By all means, Dwight; I had quite forgotten the Lingham estate. The other places you thought so beautiful are nothing in comparison to this. We'll start as soon after breakfast as we can. I wish you could accompany us, Phil."

"I wish I could. I'm sure I'd enjoy it as much as any of you; but I can't; so that's the end of it. Father can, though, I suppose."

"No, Phil, I don't feel well enough; and besides, I promised Mr. Selwin that I'd run over the accounts with him this afternoon. So you see it's out of the question."

"Then the rest of us will go, since the temptation is too strong to be resisted, and we'll enjoy ourselves too," added Alden, rising.

As soon as father and son were ready, Philip's wife, with Elva in her arms, accompanied them to the door, as usual. At the end of the avenue, Philip turned, as he always did, to kiss his hand to the baby; but instead of doing so, stood still, regarding them for a moment, then running back, snatched another kiss from both, and rejoined his father before he missed him. Why he did it, he could not have told then; but he knew later in the day.



Kathie's Views.



At college, Dwight Wallace had been Alden Lythcombe's good angel, rising up before him when danger threatened, and shielding him from many temptations. Yet in spite of his brotherly care, some dissolute young men succeeded twice in making Alden too drunk to know what he was about. The last time only two weeks before his return home. Dwight kindly screened him, so that none of his folks knew of his fall, and therefore feared nothing. Had Philip known all this, Lawyer Lingham's would have been the last place he would have suggested; for he well knew the temptations to which a young man addicted to drinking would there be exposed. But Philip was ignorant, and Dwight, never having been there, of course knew nothing about it; and poor Alden went on to his doom with none to give him timely warning.

The morning was glorious; clear and bright, with just enough breeze to send the boat along briskly; yet, notwithstanding their speed, it was almost eleven o'clock when they entered the little cove and landed.

There was so much to see and admire, that all were surprised when the great gong sounded for

dinner, and a score or more of farm hands came hurrying from their work and filed into the long kitchen.

"We dine at one," said Mr. Lingham, when the last man had disappeared, "so there is another hour for exploring."

The barn and poultry yard were examined, and they were just going to the conservatory, when the gong again sounded.

"For us, this time, isn't it?" asked little Ray. "I'm awful hungry. Seems to me I could eat hay."

Every one laughed, and the lawyer, leading the way to the dining-room, where delicious odors were arising from the covered dishes, exclaimed:

"Now, my man, we'll give you something better than hay."

When dessert was served, Lawyer Lingham poured out a glass of champagne from the sparkling bottle at his side, and passing it to Alden, said:

"You must visit my wine-cellar after dinner, and select a bottle or two of rare old port to take home with you."

"Not take wine, Mr. Wallace! Why, you don't know what you lose. I'd as soon think of going without my dinner altogether, as without my wine. I believe in moderation."

"Well, Al, since there's nobody but ourselves and Mrs. Lingham who cares for wine, we'll make the best of it."

While the others were resting upon the veranda after dinner, Mr. Lingham took Alden to his wine-cellar. Alden took generous sips of this and that, to test their merit, he said; so by the time he had made his selection and joined the party upon the veranda, he was too much intoxicated to be responsible for what he did.

Dwight was looking through a telescope at a little black speck off in the distance.

"There is a storm brewing," he observed, lowering his telescope. "I'm afraid it will overtake us unless we start at once."

Alden remonstrated, but Dwight stepped up to him and whispered a few words that made him willing, and the party, after bidding their kind host and hostess good-bye, started for home.

For the first half-hour the sail was delightful, the boat skimming along the surface of the water

like a thing of air. Then suddenly there was a calm. The boat stood still. Then the sun disappeared, the wind blew a terrible gale, and the water rose in great swells like the in-coming tide of the ocean. The boat reared, and plunged from side to side, threatening to capsize.

Dwight, with a white face but firm hand, had hard work to manage the sail, but at length succeeded in lowering it. Then seizing the oars, he did his best to get out of the way of a steamer that was bearing down upon them. But the oars were like feathers in his hands against the fierce gale. He shouted to Alden, who, too drunk to comprehend their peril, sat half asleep in the bottom of the boat, his head keeping time with the motion. He looked up stupidly upon hearing his name, and then settled back into the same position.

"Alden, Alden, rouse yourself! Look! Look! Don't you see our danger? The steamer is almost upon us! Quick! Quick!" shouted Dwight, making frantic efforts to steer to one side.

Alden, dimly understanding that something was the matter, sprang up suddenly. A cry—a plunge. The boat overturned, and all were

struggling in the surging waters of the lake. The crew and passengers of the Belle of the Lake had witnessed the catastrophe, and in a few moments a boat was lowered, and four seamen leaped into it. A stout rope was then lowered to them, and they rowed with all possible speed to the scene of the disaster.

The rain now poured in torrents, and the angry swells lashed with fury against the boat, threatening to dash it to pieces; but the brave sailors fought vigorously, and when at length a form appeared above the water, the coil of rope was thrown to his assistance. The form, however, almost immediately disappeared. When it reappeared, one of the seaman, clutching the coil, sprang over the side of the boat and grasped it. It was Dwight Wallace, either dead or unconscious, for he gave no sign of life; and the sailor, with his helpless burden, was hauled into the boat.

With eager eyes the sailors watched for others to appear, and, after some time, they saw what seemed to be a woman with two children in her arms, drifting far beyond their reach. Then another form appeared for a moment, and with



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With eager eyes the sailors watched for others to appear, and, after some time, they saw what seemed to be a woman with two children in her arms, drifting far beyond their reach. Then another form appeared for a moment, and with

a shriek of terror that was heard distinctly above the fury of the tempest, threw up its hands imploringly, then sank.

The steamer was now near enough to the boat for those upon her to catch the rope that was thrown to them, and the seamen and the man they had rescued were soon safe on board. There happened to be a physician among the passengers, who, with the aid of others, did everything possible to bring back life to poor Dwight Wallace. But in vain! The vital spark had fled.

With sad hearts they waited for the storm to cease. It raged wildly for an hour, each terrific peal of thunder making the timbers of the steamer tremble, and brave hearts quake.

The captain, with white face but firm step, seemed to be everywhere; giving an order here, an encouraging word there, a peremptory command where it was needed, all the while breathing heavenward the prayer:

"Lord, we are in thy hands. Do with us as seemeth best."

The storm had come up suddenly, and as suddenly it ceased. The wind stopped blowing, the

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water became calm, and the sun broke through the clouds, shedding his rays far over the lake, where an upturned boat alone remained to tell the sad fate of those who had occupied it less than two hours before.

As soon as the steamer landed, and the dead man was recognized, telegrams were sent to his friends, and to Philip Lythcombe. The latter was at dinner with a friend, and had just related a funny saying of little Ray's, over which they were laughing, when the telegram reached him.

With trembling fingers he broke the seal, expecting he knew not what. As he read the terrible message, his blood seemed to congeal, and his face became like marble. "God in mercy help me," came through the white lips. The paper fell from the frozen fingers, and a moment later, men looked with wonder, and women and children screamed with terror, as a man with wild eyes and flying hair, came rushing, hatless, through the streets, never stopping until he reached the wharf where the steamer lay at anchor.

"Where is he? Where is he? Where is Dwight Wallace?" he screamed shrilly, clasping

his hands over his head to protect it from the sun.

With looks of pity, the throng of people that had gathered moved aside to let Philip pass into the cabin, where the body of poor Dwight Wallace lay upon a lounge.

"Where are the rest of them? My wife—my children?" he asked, hoarsely, crouching beside Dwight, and vigorously chafing one of his hands.

"They are dragging the lake for the bodies," said Dr. Foster, laying his hand kindly upon Philip's shoulders. "My poor fellow, I'm sorry for you. It's a terrible blow—a crushing blow. Only God can help you to bear it. You are weak and trembling. The excitement has been too much for you. Let me help you to the lounge in the other cabin."

But Philip objected.

"No," he replied; "I'll stay here until they bring in the others. Yes, I can bear it. Leave me; I'll bear it alone."

The hours passed on. At sundown a sorrowful procession came slowly up the shore, bearing the other bodies. It was followed by an old

man with silver locks, who leaned heavily upon his staff. The dripping burdens were laid side by side upon the floor of the cabin, where the old man who had followed, regarded them curiously for a moment, then turned towards Philip, and said :

“So you’re sad and broken-hearted too, young man. Is it your brother? Yonder lies my bonny wife, with a smile upon her lips and seaweed in her hair.”

At the sound of his father’s voice, Philip turned, and held out his hand.

“Father, poor father,” he said, sadly, “we are all that are left.”

There was no look of recognition in the eyes that sought his. The shock had been too great. Reason had fled forever.

It was a pitiable sight to see the heart-broken young man moving among his dead ; kissing the cold lips of his fair young wife, smoothing his mother’s hair, and entreating his little son to speak to “poor papa.” Strong men were moved to tears, and the sobs of women and children were heard on all sides.

Late in the evening, the party who had set out

so merrily in the morning, were borne back to the home that would know them no more forever; and Dwight Wallace's body was sent to his relatives. Two days later, the great church was crowded, and the burial services were performed. Then the dear ones were laid away, and the two lonely men returned to their desolate home.

Two weeks later, there was another funeral, and Philip was alone. Then followed a few days of anguish, and relief came in sickness. Brain fever set in, and it was many weeks before Philip was out of danger.

As soon as Dr. Arnot pronounced him convalescent, he was removed to the parsonage, where Mrs. Irving's tender care soon restored him to his usual health. As he had formed no plans for the future, he gladly accepted his pastor's kind invitation to make the parsonage his home for the present. So winter passed away, and the bright spring days, with their birds and flowers, came before he was ready to leave the parsonage.

Philip's long illness and convalescence were productive of good results. His heart was full of gratitude to God for sparing his life; for,

had he died in his sins, he knew the separation from his wife and little ones would have been final. An earnest longing for salvation was awakened. He sought his pastor's help; and, after a brief struggle, he found through faith in Christ Jesus, the "peace that passeth understanding." Henceforth, life to him would be "reaching forth unto those things that are before."

During Philip's stay at the parsonage, a warm friendship sprang up between himself and Harry Irving, then a lad of thirteen. Harry's religion was the kind that served him for every-day use. It showed itself in numberless ways. In his prompt and cheerful obedience to his parents' commands; in his tender solicitude for his mother; in his scrupulous regard for truth; in his regular attendance at the weekly prayer-meeting; in the careful preparation of his lessons for school; and more particularly in his forgetfulness of self.

The example of this youthful disciple did more to help Philip than any number of sermons would have done. His liking soon passed away, and he loved Harry as a younger brother.

After Philip left the parsonage, he spent some



months abroad, and then returned to his old place in the bank, from which he had been absent for over a year.

He let his fine estate, and went to board with Dr. Foster, opposite the parsonage. He desired to be near his kind friends, not only for friendship's sake, but because it was often necessary to consult Dr. Irving about matters pertaining to the Sunday-school, of which he was now superintendent.

Everything that Philip undertook to do, he did heartily, but to this work he gave every spare moment, and often some of his sleeping time. Dr. Irving found in him an able assistant, friend, and sympathizer. All the pet schemes of Sunday-school work that the doctor had cherished for years, were now brought to light. One by one they were worked in, and one day, Dr. Irving astonished Philip by saying in the presence of his wife, that he had a school and superintendent of which any pastor might be proud.

"I don't mean that there isn't a chance for still greater improvement," he added, laughing; "for the best Sunday-schools are those that keep

pace with the times, and time, you know, never stands still."

Philip Lythcombe was a rich man, and when he gave himself to the Lord, he did not say, as others of his brethren, "Lord, I'll give thee myself, but my fortune I'll keep for my own use." He said to his pastor:

"Dr. Irving, the Lord has given me means in order to do good ; all I have is his, so when you need money to do good with, take it from the Lord's treasury."

There were many poor families in Dr. Irving's church ; consequently, there were many poor children in the Sunday-school.

In the Gospel by Matthew, the third and fourth verses of the sixth chapter read :

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. That thine alms may be in secret : and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

It was quite a common thing for the pastor to leave word for his superintendent to call over in the evening, after a day's visiting among the poor, and never did he fail to present himself.

Sometimes Dr. Irving would present a slip of paper, with items like the following :

"Old Mrs. Dennis quite ill ; needs a doctor."

"Mrs. Hooper's store not fit for the winter."

"Widow Graham out of coal."

"An easy-chair for rheumatic Grandmother Russel."

"The Green family out of flour."

"A baby-carriage acceptable to little Mrs. Deane."

"A willow rocker, and some provisions for blind Nelson and his wife."

"The Hutting children kept from Sunday-school from lack of clothes."

After the presentation of such a list, the expressman would invariably stop at each of the houses named, in the course of a day or two, much to the delight and surprise of the inmates, who often longed for denied comforts, but rarely expected to possess them.

"Receive them as sent by the Lord," the good pastor would say, when this and that one told him of his unexpected good fortune, "for doubtless he put it into the heart of some kind brother to do it. Give him the praise."

## CHAPTER III.

### *THE HOME AMONG THE HILLS.*

MANY miles away from the First Church, far up among the hills of Vermont, stands an old-fashioned farm house. Let me picture a scene there that sad July afternoon, nine years before the opening of my story.

It is sunset, the last day of July. The day has been almost torrid in its heat, but a gentle breeze is now stirring among the trees, and making a delightful current of air through the low, wide hall that runs through the centre of the house, and whose opposite doors are both open to admit it. It plays, too, with the snowy curtains of the pretty parlor, which is all in readiness—as is everything else in this well-ordered home—for the morrow.

In a rustic seat in the arch before the door, sits Uldon Wallace, the father of the family, a hale, hearty man of, perhaps, fifty. There are threads of silver in the dark brown hair, and

furrows in the broad forehead; but his smile is just as sunny, and his love just as strong now, as thirty years ago, when he brought sweet May Hadden to be the mistress of his snug little farm.

For six years, the gentle wife and mother of his seven children, has slept beneath the daisies with little Theo; and since her departure, the old place has never been quite the same. Yet, he loves to sit in her favorite seat, and imagine her with him as of old. In the distance, on the hill-side, the old church spire is plainly visible; and at its left, with the rays of the setting sun falling upon it, gleams the marble that marks her resting place. But the eyes turned in their direction see neither, for Uldon Wallace is blind. Opposite him sits his mother, her snowy hair encased in a snowy cap, and a snowy kerchief over her shoulders. Were it not for her silver hair, she would look younger than her son, although she is seventy. Her face wears the same placid smile, and there is a tender light in her bright eyes, as they turn from her knitting every few minutes, to look upon her son, and then wander from him to the porch, where a frail,

white lady, of about thirty, sits in an invalid chair. Her eyes are closed, and one hand holds that of a little girl of nine summers, who, with her disengaged hand, is fanning her softly. The lady is Mrs. Danforth, Mrs. Wallace's youngest daughter, and the little girl is Kathie, her only child. Two years before, brave Joel Danforth, Captain of the Snowbird, had been swept from the deck of his vessel during a terrible storm, and lost. His body was never recovered, and since then, his young wife, always frail, had been slowly fading away.

Beneath the elms upon the lawn, five young girls are playing croquet. They are Nannie, Sophy, Kittie, Louise, and Faye, and they are aged respectively, twenty, seventeen, fourteen, eleven, and eight. They are the daughters of Uldon Wallace; and their merry laughter floating out upon the breeze, causes the father to wake from his reverie. He turns his head in their direction a moment, and shades his eyes with his hand, as if he fain would see the dear faces that he is never more to behold with earthly eyes. Then, turning to his mother, he asks, abruptly:

"Isn't it most time for the stage? Seems to me I hear the rumble of wheels in the distance. I wonder if Dwight will drop a line."

"It would be very unlike Dwight, if he did not, my son. There is the stage now. Kathie, love, run for the mail."

The child thus addressed, bounds away like a fawn, and soon after returns, holding up the desired letter, and exclaiming :

"I've got it, uncle! I've got it, grandmamma! A letter from Cousin Dwight! I know his writing, and it's directed to uncle. See, it reads, Uldon Wallace, Esq. Read it, quick, grandmamma, and see when he's coming home. What fine times Louise and Faye and I shall have!"

Grandmamma smiles complacently, then reads aloud the brief note :

You'll have all you want of me ; Monday, at one.  
Have a tip-top dinner for your boy

DWIGHT.

"Dear old fellow!" said the father, fondly. "How proud May would have been had she lived to see our son in college. Our only son."

Just then, the five girls came running into the archway.

"Is it from Dwight, grandmamma? When is he coming?" they asked in chorus.

For reply, Mrs. Wallace re-read the note.

"It seems to me he might have written a little more," said Faye, in a disappointed tone. "I'll tell him so, too, when I see him."

"Never mind, Faye, dear," said Nannie softly, stroking her little sister's hair. "He'll have all the more to tell us when he comes."

Two years before, Dwight had, at his father's earnest desire, mortgaged the farm for a sum of money, which, added to what he had already saved, would, he thought, be sufficient to carry him through college. An unusually bright scholar, he had graduated at the academy before he was fifteen, and then spent a few hours each day studying with the pastor. When sixteen, he was ready for college, but was obliged to give up the idea for a time. Little Theo's long sickness and death, his mother's sudden death, and his father's loss of sight, all occurring then, the money that had been laid by from year to year for defraying his college expenses had to be broken. By the time the doctor's bills were settled, and the farm hands paid, and this and



that want provided for, the little fund was very nearly exhausted.

Four years passed by, during which Dwight had labored hard, and saved all he could. Still, the sum was far from adequate to meet his needs. Dwight would have abandoned the idea altogether, but his father would not hear of it, and insisted that he should mortgage the farm.

"It was mother's wish, my boy ; and I would rather sell the place than know that her desire had not been gratified."

"I'll pay it all off, father, every cent of it, when I'm through, if I have to work night and day to do it," Dwight said, much moved. "God helping me, you will never have cause to regret this sacrifice, dear father."

So Dwight entered college, and for two years everything had turned out even better than he had expected ; and to-day the idolized son and brother had sent word that he would be with them Monday noon. Of course they were glad. Had they not reason to be, when they had not seen him for two long years ? The tall clock in a corner of the old-fashioned kitchen chimed the half-hour. Half-past seven. Time for family worship.

"Call the girls, Kathie," grandmamma said, rising, and giving her arm to her son, leading the way into the pleasant sitting-room. When they were all assembled, grandmamma read:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." She read through the whole Psalm, and at its close, remarked that she thought that Psalm applicable in times of great rejoicing as well as in times of great sorrow. The family then sang a sweet old hymn, after which, Uldon Wallace offered his simple evening prayer. What little Kathie Danforth once said to the minister, in speaking of her uncle, describes his praying much better than I could, were I to attempt it:

"I always feel as if God is in the room, when Uncle Uldon prays, and that he is talking to God."

The old clock again chimed, the hour, instead of the half-hour, this time. Worship was over, but the family still lingered. Kathie, who was at the window, broke the silence by saying:

"Why, grandmamma, there's a strange boy coming up the walk! I wonder what he wants! Shall I go and see?"

"No, dear, I'll go," said Nannie, who had risen after Kathie's first sentence, and was already upon the threshold between the sitting-room and kitchen.

"A telegram for Mr. Uldon Wallace. The charge marked on it to pay for delivering," said the boy rapidly.

Nannie paid the money, and received the message. Quickly re-entering the sitting-room, she exclaimed, gaily:

"A telegram from Glenwyn. Perhaps Dwight is coming home sooner than he expected. I wonder——"

The sentence was never finished, for Nannie's eyes were scanning the sheet. It dropped from her trembling fingers to the floor.

"Oh, father! father! grandmamma! Dwight is dead! Our dear Dwight! Drowned in Glenwyn Lake this afternoon!" she shrieked, clutching a chair to keep from falling.

"Dead, Nannie? No, oh no, it cannot be, because we've just heard from him to-night. Read it, mother, and tell them it is not true," and the blind parent put out his hands imploringly, as if to prevent the impending evil.

The happy group of a few minutes before, gathered around grandmamma with white, terror-stricken faces, while the old lady, with quivering voice read :

Your son, Dwight Wallace, was drowned, with five others, in Glenwyn Lake this afternoon, during the storm. His body will be sent in the evening express.

C. P. FOSTER.

Only a groan of anguish, and the head fell forward, and the outstretched hands dropped lifeless at the blind man's side. Uldon Wallace was dead.

No pen can describe the grief of the aged mother and orphans. The next few weeks were trying indeed. First there was the sorrowful home-coming of the brother, then the laying away of the dear ones from sight. Next the dear old homestead was sold, and Nannie went to teach in a distant town. Sophy took in plain sewing, and Kittie, with what help grandmamma could give her, kept house for the little ones, and the invalid aunt, who died during the winter, leaving her little Kathie to her mother's care.

So Philip Lythcombe found them, one bright

day in spring, soon after leaving the parsonage. Tenderly he spoke of the dear brother whom he had known and loved. Kindly and wisely he advised and planned, and at last persuaded them to believe it was his right to offer his services as son and brother. The old farm was repurchased, and made over to Nannie, who was married in the fall, and went to live there with her sisters. Grandmamma Wallace and Kathie, Philip took back to Glenwyn with him, established them in a comfortable home, and paid a servant to help them.

Every year, Philip spent a month at the old farm. The first two summers, grandmamma and Kathie accompanied him, but since then, grandmamma had been too feeble, and Kathie could not be persuaded to leave her. Seven years had now passed since she had seen her cousins. During that time, Sophy and Kitty had married and gone to homes of their own, but Louise and Faye still remained at the homestead with Nannie. The latter would have been glad to share her home with her grandmother and cousin, but Brother Philip, as they called him at the farm house, always told them

that they where is property, and he could not part with them.

This summer Philip had brought back word that Kathie must visit them in the fall, as Faye was going to be married, and she must have Cousin Kathie for her bridesmaid. Grandmamma had seemed much better during the spring, so Kathie resolved she would spend October at the farm, if grandmamma still kept well. She tenderly loved the little playmate of her childhood, and longed to see her once more; so she wrote her a long letter, promising to visit her if possible.

During the nine years that Kathie Danforth and her grandmother had lived in Glenwyn, Philip Lythcombe had been a frequent and very welcome guest. He had learned to love the dear old lady as his mother, and Kathie as a little sister, so he thought for a time. But during the last two years, as he had watched the child develop into a woman, he suddenly became conscious that the love he now felt for her was a very different kind of love from what a man feels for his sister, even though he loves her very tenderly. He thought her too young to assume

the responsibilities of a wife, so resolved to say nothing then, and unconscious Kathie, never dreaming of such a thing, received him cordially, and by her winning ways and sunny smiles lured him on. Grandmamma had long suspected how Philip felt; so one day, when he asked for her one treasure, she was not surprised, and gladdened his heart by telling him that there was no one to whom she would so willingly give her darling as himself.

Such was the state of affairs that bright Sunday afternoon when Kathie found her work.

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## CHAPTER IV.

*"SHE'S QUEER, TOM, BUT I LIKE HER."*

THERE will be one minute at the opening and close of each session of the school, in which all teachers who desire it may pray for their classes," announced Dr. Irving, after his usual five-minute talk to the children. "I hope many will improve it."

It was perfectly quiet for a second; every one was so surprised. What could Dr. Irving mean? Teachers looked at their scholars in a bewildered sort of way, and the scholars returned the look with one which said, "Does he mean it?" Yes, he meant it; for all agreed that the pastor never said what he did not mean.

Each was so occupied in his own affairs that none except the pastor, superintendent and the scholars in her class, saw Kathie Danforth drop upon her knees. But a clear, low voice said, with a tremble that was observable at first, but passed away before she finished: "Dear Jesus, I, thy feeble child, have undertaken this work for



thee. Thou hast the power, and canst, if thou wilt, bring forth good results from to-day's efforts; and wilt thou do it, dear Lord? Amen."

As she closed, more than two hundred pairs of eyes were riveted upon her. But the superintendent's little bell ringing just then, told them it was lesson time; so the eager eyes were withdrawn.

The new teacher's simple prayer so impressed the scholars, that, if they had intended mischief, they either forgot it, or had the grace to put it off for that time; for a more attentive class teacher never had.

After taking their names, ages, and places of residence, Kathie gave each a searching, critical look, and remarked:

"Mr. Lythcombe said I had a peculiar class, but I want to have a remarkable one. All who would like their class to be remarkable, hold up their hands."

Every hand was raised.

"That's good. Now all who will do their part towards making it remarkable, show hands."

Again every hand was raised, and every face beamed with pleasure. All were expectant.

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"That's better," said the teacher, heartily.

Amy Caswell's face wore a puzzled look.

"Why," she said, "I think it's just the same. We all raised our hands the first time, and we've all raised them now. What's the difference?"

"Will somebody tell Amy the difference?" inquired Kathie, smiling.

"It's in the doing, isn't it?" responded Luther Greyson, a tall, white-faced boy, with threadbare clothes, whose only beauty was in his eyes, which were large and bright.

"Quite right," said Kathie, giving the boy a gratified look. "In the first case, you merely expressed a desire; but in the second, you promised to do something. Do you see it now, dear?" looking lovingly into the sweet little face upraised to hers.

"Oh, yes'm, thank you," answered the child, flushing with pleasure.

"Well," continued the teacher, distributing some cards, "we will see some of the first steps to be taken, in order to make a successful class. Luther, will you please read what your card says about it?"

In a clear voice, Luther read:

"Always be in your place, unless you have a good excuse.

"Be punctual at the appointed hour.

"Be attentive.

"Be respectful.

"Always have your lesson prepared.

"Pray for your teacher and classmates.

"Try to make somebody else happy."

Most of the bright faces were serious now. Kathie looked from one to another, and then said, softly:

"You all promised to do your part towards helping to make our class remarkable. Now these are the things to begin with; but they imply a great deal. Some of you may say you can respond to two, three, five, perhaps six of these requirements; but all of them—is there any one who can respond to them all?"

Instantly two hands were raised. They were Luther's and Amy's.

The light that shone in Kathie's face made it seem almost beautiful.

"I am glad; oh, so glad!" holding out a hand to each. "This is so much better than I expected. Two of my class Christians already.

There will be three of us to plead for the rest, and they will all be Christians soon."

"What reason have you for being so sure?" inquired Norman Arnot, a bright, roguish boy of thirteen.

"'Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in their midst.' Christ's own words, Norman. Two are Christians. How many would like to be?"

The hands were raised a third time.

"How many will try to be?"

One by one the hands came up, until all were raised but three.

"Why not, Fannie?"

The child looked at her classmates, then at herself, and, lastly, at her teacher. "You see, I am not like other children," she said, sadly, fixing her eyes upon those looking so compassionately upon her.

"Yes, dear." The voice was very tender.

"Well, if God is 'all-powerful,' as my uncle says, he could have made me like them. He could make me better now; but he don't. He never will. Papa says I may live for years, but I'll never be any better. I'll always have to go

on crutches—always have to suffer pain. ‘God is love,’ the Bible says; but I don’t believe it. I can’t. That’s why.”

A look of defiance settled upon the child’s face, sad to see in one so young.

“‘He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.’ True, he has afflicted you; but he, too, suffered; and even though you won’t love him, he loves you, even you, little Fannie”—said Kathie, quietly, stroking the rings of sunny hair that fell over the child’s shoulders.

Instantly there was a revulsion of feeling. The hard expression passed away. A pathetic little face, with tearful blue eyes, was raised for a moment to Kathie’s; then, seizing the hand that was stroking her hair, the child kissed it passionately, saying simply:

“That was mamma’s verse; and she is in heaven now. I’d like to try for mamma’s sake, if I only could believe; but I can’t,” and she turned away to hide her emotion.

“You can if you will, Fannie. It is simply

a matter of choice. Any one is free to accept or to reject Christ. God grant that you may be found among the first class."

Something in the manner of the boy and girl who had been unwilling to say that they would try, told the teacher it was best not to urge them then; so she addressed the class.

"Scholars, how many of you are temperance boys and girls?"

Luther and Amy raised their hands.

"Total abstinence, both of 'em. Even cider is excluded," said Tom Whiting, giving each an admiring look. "I guess you're glad, aren't you, Miss Danforth?"

"Yes, Tom, very glad; but why are not you a total abstinence boy too?"

"I? Oh, it's the cider. I couldn't give it up. Of course I believe in temperance. It's a good thing; but I don't see the necessity of carrying it too far. Sweet cider isn't any more harmful than strong tea or coffee; and perhaps even you drink that, Miss Danforth"—casting a roguish glance at his teacher.

"Yes, Tom, I take both; but did you ever know tea or coffee to make a person drunk?"



"Drunk? Why, no, of course not," said Tom, with a look of surprise.

"Well, do you know that cider will make a person as drunk as rum or brandy, if he takes enough?"


"Will it? I didn't know that. Are you sure of it?"

"Quite sure; and if you would like to have me tell you about it, I'll do so."

"Oh yes, Miss Danforth, please do! Perhaps it will make some one else join our side," pleaded Amy.

"Yes, please do, Miss Danforth," said a chorus of voices.

"When I was a little girl," began Kathie, "only six years old, my father was lost at sea, and my mother and I went to live with my uncle, up among the hills of Vermont. He was a farmer, and had a large family of children. They were all older than I, except Faye, a chubby, roly-poly little thing, fourteen months younger. I loved them all; but Faye I loved as a sister, for I had none of my own; and she in return, loved me, and made me her confidanté, in preference to her sisters. A large farm ad-



joined my uncle's, where every fall they used to make quantities of cider. They had three boys, all older than Faye and I, and they were very fond of us. We thought it a great privilege to attend the cider making, and were always supplied with a generous mug of cider. It happened one day that I was too sick to go with Faye, so she went alone. Grandmamma and Nannie, Faye's eldest sister, never thought of harm coming to their darling. It was late in the afternoon when the boys brought Faye home. Johnny, the eldest, had her in his arms, her head resting upon his shoulders. 'Little Faye's pretty tired, I guess,' he said, 'for she went to sleep out in the barn, and we had hard work to wake her. Father says he's afraid she drank too much cider. He was away for an hour or so, and Faye and Tim sucked lots of cider through a straw. Lots of it.' Grandmamma had come in while he was talking. She was flushed and heated; but she turned white enough when she saw Faye. Taking her from Johnny, she stood her upon her feet, trying to rouse her; but she couldn't stand alone.

"'I'm dizzy, dranma, but I had a lovely time,

and I'm tired, and I don't feel nice a bit. Timmy and me sucked lots of cider through a straw, and I sucked most, ever so much more than Timmy—lots, and lots, and lots—and——'

"The tired little head fell over upon her shoulder, and although grandmamma shook her, and her sister almost screamed her name, she heeded it not.

"Oh, how frightened we were when we found we couldn't wake her! Grandmamma sent one of the farm hands for the doctor, and we anxiously waited for his coming. Every minute seemed an hour, and when he came and took our helpless little one in his arms, and listened to her heavy breathing and counted her pulse, the puzzled expression upon his face turned to one of disgust. Laying her tenderly upon the lounge, he said:

"'Poor little thing.' Then turning to grandmamma, he continued: 'Old Ben Hudson was never quite so drunk as that little baby. Why, madam, that child is in a drunken stupor; and if she recovers from the effects of it in forty-eight hours, I shall be astonished.'

"Poor little Faye! All through that night, the next day, and the next, she slept on, moan-

ing piteously, once in awhile, but giving no signs of returning consciousness. During the morning of the third day, she awoke, and told grandmamma she was hungry; but before she had half eaten what grandmamma brought her, she was asleep again. So it continued for more than a week. Faye slept the greater part of the time; but when, at last, she was our dear little Faye again, and the good doctor told us how nearly we had lost her, how we hated the word cider! Once, when he asked Faye if she would like some, she shook her head gravely, and replied:

“Faye was drunk once, and cider did it. I never want to smell it again—never! never!”

“This is a true story, children, and Faye is a young lady now. So you see, Tom, that the cider that keeps you from being a temperance boy, may help to make you an intemperate man. The boy or girl who loves cider, will, in all probability, crave something stronger when a man or a woman. Beware of anything that intoxicates. It is ‘the little foxes that spoil the vines,’ you know. By next Sunday, or the one after, I hope to have pledges, and I may hope, may I not, to

have each of you take one. What do you think about it, Tom?"

"It's a pretty serious question, Miss Danforth, and one that I can't decide now, but I'll think about it. There's Archie Lincoln; he'll decide this minute against cider forever. I can read total abstinence upon his face, but Tom Whiting—well, Miss Danforth, your story did impress me, but I haven't the courage to say good-bye to cider yet."

"And will a brave boy let so small a thing as a glass of cider conquer him?" asked Kathie, in a low voice.

Tom colored slightly, but made no reply; and yet that last little sentence of his teacher had done more than all the rest to convince Tom that he ought to take the stand then. It settled the question for some of them; for Norman Arnot changed his seat beside Tom to one next to Luther, saying:

"Nothing stronger than water for me from this time forth. Archie, here's a place for you, if you want it."

Without a word, Archie took it.

"One, two, three, four," counted Kathie,

taking the seat Archie had just vacated. "I wonder if there are not others who would like to decide now? If so, they may move."

Clare Lester was the only boy left. His face was scarlet one minute, and white the next. He knew Tom was watching him, and he valued Tom's opinion much, and his friendship more. His breath came in quick, short gasps. He looked Tom squarely in the eye for a moment, and his decision was made. It was the greatest sacrifice he had ever been called upon to make; but he made it. Taking Tom's hand in his he squeezed it hard, and whispered:

"Good-bye, Tom; but I love you all the more."

Then, rising, he took the seat next to Amy; and Lotta Gray, Fannie Arnot, and Lucia Denham followed him in order. Dell Faxon, a bright, handsome girl, the only one left, hesitated a moment, then rising, went and sat down by Tom.

"I'll keep you company, for I dare not incur mamma's displeasure," she said, with a laugh, flashing her dark eyes upon Tom.

"Thank you; but I should have respected you

more if you had taken the other side," he returned, shortly.

"What a short hour!" whispered Amy, as the bell sounded.

As Kathie rose, after offering a few words of prayer, she experienced a thrill of joy on seeing Susie Weld, with her class of five little girls, still kneeling. Had not her labors thus far been wonderfully blessed?

"She's queer, Tom; but I like her," said Clare Lester, as Tom linked his arm in his, after Sunday-school was over, and both had started for home.

"Queer! she's remarkable! Even more remarkable than she wishes her class to be. I'll tell you what, Clare, you don't catch me cutting up any more after this; and what's more, I don't mean to miss a Sunday, unless I'm too sick to come. And, Clare, I honor you for the stand you took to-day. How glad your mother will be. Good-bye;" and Tom darted down Terrace Avenue, to his elegant home, leaving Clare in an ecstasy of delight at the knowledge that Tom was still his friend.

## CHAPTER V.

### *TOM WHITING'S HOME.*

LAWYER WHITING'S home was the largest and handsomest upon Terrace Avenue. Everything that wealth could procure was there. The grounds, which comprised several acres, were beautifully laid out. At one side there was a grotto, whose graceful palms, gushing rivulets, and rare tropical plants made it a place of wonder and enchantment. The opposite side was encircled with fine elms, and in the centre of them was an artificial lake, upon which was a sail-boat and a row-boat. Within the house, there were richly frescoed walls, carpets, upon which the feet made no sound, groups of statuary here and there, curtains of the finest texture, easy chairs and lounges, into whose velvety depths you sank—sank, until you might question how much of you was left. This was Tom's home. Does it not seem that he ought to have been a very grateful and happy boy?



I wish you to come with me into the dining-room which Tom entered as soon as he reached home.

At the head of the bountifully spread table, with its glittering silver and snowy damask, sits a white-haired, portly gentleman. This is Tom's father. Opposite him, sits his wife, a very fashionable woman, whose face always wears one of two expressions—fretfulness or sarcasm. It is the former now; and an equally fretful voice says, as the door shuts with a bang:

"Late again, Tom! What a provoking boy you are! Oh, that door! Will you ever learn to be quiet?"

"Doors will slam, you know, and boots will thump, even if you're careful," replied Tom, tumbling into a chair in such a way as to make the dishes dance; "and, really, I did mean to be careful this time."

"Yes, I should think so," responded the whining voice. "You're a very careful boy, indeed; very careful!"

"Boys will be boys, mother," interrupted the father, smiling fondly upon his son. "I was much more noisy than Tom when I was his age.

Come, my boy, eat your dinner, and then you shall have a whole goblet of wine, as a luxury."

Tom laughed.

"Wine is father's infallible cure for every ill," he said, addressing a young student next to him. "Is it yours too, Mr. Arthur?"

"Mine, Tom? Why, don't you know that I take nothing stronger than water?" inquired the young man, in feigned surprise.

"I didn't know," replied Tom, absently. "I thought you—well—but——"

"Nonsense, Arthur!" interrupted Mr. Whiting, impatiently. "I heard of that ridiculous affair of Irving's among the students, but I did not believe that you had joined them."

Fred Arthur flushed slightly, and looked at Tom as if he wished he were anywhere but next him, watching him so eagerly.

Oh, Fred, could you have read Tom's thoughts, how differently you would have spoken!

Fred Arthur was the only son of Mr. Whiting's dearest friend. He was a student at Glenwyn College, and occasionally took dinner and spent an evening with the family of his father's

friend. He liked Mr. Whiting, and desired his good opinion for more reasons than one. The lawyer had a pretty daughter, who was now at boarding-school, but as she spent her vacations at home, young Arthur had met her several times, and intended, at no very distant day, to ask her to be his wife. Mr. Whiting was rich, too, the richest man in Glenwyn; and the man who got Leslie Whiting for his wife, got something beside herself. He meant to be the lucky man, if possible, for his father was only tolerably comfortable, and he hated work with all his heart, but did like a lazy, indolent time; so he had thus far managed to keep in Mr. Whiting's good graces.

Seeing that the gentleman was disappointed in him, he hastened to say, looking away from Tom's eyes:

"That was an absurd affair of Irving's, to be sure; but a number of us pledged ourselves for a certain length of time; some for three months, some for six, others for a year, and a few for life." If he had only seen Tom's eyes then, but he did not look. "I was upon the first list, *and* the time has expired now, and I am free

once more, to do as I please. Dear me! Those three months seemed like as many years. Irving was so rigid too. His pledge included even cider."

"Whew! I should call him an out and out fanatic upon the temperance question," returned the lawyer, decidedly.

"I don't know that the boys would agree with you, sir; but I suppose you are right. I, for one, never mean to tie myself down to another pledge of any kind. I think a man may take a glass of wine with a friend and not make a fool of himself, don't you?"

"Don't I? For fifteen years I never missed my wine at dinner, and am I any the worse for it? Look at me! I am as stout and strong and active, as sharp-sighted and clear-headed, as any man of my age. I take wine in small quantities, and I mean to do so as long as I live." Saying this, he passed a glass to Fred, who at once began to sip it, and then handed one to Tom. But Tom's remained untasted.

If Harry Irving had been there, and had seen Mr. Whiting half an hour after dinner, he would have questioned the truth of his statements thus :

“Does that loose, flabby flesh about the body, and those red blotches on the face, mean health and strength? Does the restless look in the eyes, and the increasing drowsiness after dinner, give evidence of a clear brain? Mr. Whiting, you are laboring under a delusion. You are bound in chains that are growing tighter and tighter every day you live. Beware!”

All the eagerness died out of Tom's face, and a fierce, almost sullen expression, took its place. He was disappointed and thoroughly disgusted with his father's friend. He lacked something, he didn't know just what, but he was not a bit like Harry Irving. Nobody was just like him—so brave, so true, so noble, so kind and generous. No, he did not know any young man quite so good as Harry—nobody he admired nearly as much. Harry had something that made him different from others. Tom wondered what it was, and longed, oh, so much, to have it too.

“I mean to ask him, one of these days; for I want to grow up to be just such a man as he is. Perhaps Clare will be just like him. He's so much nicer than the other boys in Glenwyn. Yes, *I mean to ask him sometime.*”

So Tom said every time he met Harry, and so he said to-day; and happy in the thought, he forgot Fred Arthur, and went upon the lake to sail.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *DELL FAXON.*

**J**UST across the street from Lawyer Whiting's, and nearly opposite, stands another residence; less pretentious, but very elegant. This is the home of Dell Faxon. Her father is the President of Glenwyn Bank, and Dell is his only child. Her own mother died at her birth; so Dell is a very different sort of girl from what she might have been had she enjoyed a mother's watchful care during the early years of her life. Left to the care of servants, and having her own way, her stern, grave father being too much absorbed in business to give much attention to his child, she grew up haughty, self-willed, and selfish.

When Dell was eleven years old, her father married a weak, frivolous girl; a very different woman from the first Mrs. Faxon. The quiet house was quiet no longer. There were dinner and evening parties, and something going on

continually. Dell enjoyed it, and soon became an apt pupil of her step-mother, who really loved the child, and did not mean to harm her.

The people who thronged the Faxon mansion from time to time, criticised the lady's doings severely, when Dell, hardly fourteen, appeared at these fashionable evening parties. But if Mrs. Faxon heard their comments, she did not heed them, for Dell still came.

Mr. Faxon loved quiet, and being deprived of this in his own home, the solitary hours that he once spent in his library, he now spent in the office of the bank.

Selden Faxon was a temperance man, and wine had never "graced," his wife said—"polluted," he said himself—his table, until a month after his second marriage. The first dinner party had been given at that time, and wine was "an indispensable article," Mrs. Faxon had said, stroking the changing locks of her husband's hair—a habit of hers when she desired to have her own way, and fancied he might oppose her.

Mr. Faxon had remonstrated feebly, at first, but this woman, with her lustrous eyes, and bewitching smile, and cooing voice, charmed him



as no other woman could do. There was a soft spot in Selden Faxon's heart that Dell had never found; but Clara Dayton had discovered it some time before she became Mrs. Faxon.

"You know we've been married a whole month, and this is my first dinner party; and I know, dear, you would not wish me to appear awkward. I am sure I should be, if we had no wine, for we always had it at home. And then it is only for once, if you object very much. Everybody knows that you are a temperance man; so, of course, no one will expect you to take any. It is one thing to take wine, and another to have it on the table. Besides, dear, this is my first request since our marriage."

So Mrs. Faxon had urged, and her last excuse had made her victor, as usual.

After the first time, it was comparatively easy to gain her husband's consent again and again, and now wine was always upon the table. Mr. Faxon was a little troubled at first, but gradually he became used to it, and at last he ceased to think of it at all.

Dell is forward for a girl of fourteen. Bright, handsome, witty, she is never at a loss for an

answer; but to a young man of Harry Irving's sensibility, her witticisms would often appear rude.

Behold her now, this only daughter of a respected father, as she sips her wine with the rest! Notwithstanding this is Sunday, there are five invited guests, and Miss Dell is giving them an exaggerated account of Kathie's temperance talk.

"Oh, Mrs. Lee, how I wish you had been there! Such eloquence! Such zeal with which she attacked cider, poor harmless cider! Mr. Lythcombe will have an advocate in her, I assure you."

"Is Mr. Lythcombe as strong as ever upon the temperance question?" inquired Mr. Johns. "I have not forgotten that lecture he gave two years ago. I thought he overdid the thing then. He seemed all on fire."

"Strong is a tame word for such intensity as his, Mr. Johns. You ought to have heard him last Sunday evening, at our temperance concert. If he was on fire two years ago, he is a sheet of flame now. He gave it to us right and left. Old Ben Hudson, the tavern-keeper, started up

once or twice, and looked as frightened as if he had seen the evil one himself."

The guests laughed, as Dell desired, and then the young lady resumed :

"There is something very attractive about Miss Danforth, although she has such queer notions. All the scholars in the class, except Tom Whiting and myself, pledged themselves to total abstinence. Just think of it! No wine, no cider, no sauce for the pudding, if it has brandy in it; no wine jelly; and, oh, dear me! worst of all, no mince pies! How could they do it?"

Mr. Faxon, who was present, but who had thus far taken no part in the conversation, now spoke.

"Dell," he said, quietly, "I wish you had signed with the others."

"Why, father!"

Dell was so astonished she could say nothing more.

"Yes, child, I mean it. Besides, it's a very easy matter to give up mince pie, or anything else, when one is sure he has right on his side. I never take any, and I do not lose flesh on account of the deprivation."

Dell crimsoned slightly, and an angry light flashed in her eyes.

"I hope you don't think I'm in danger of becoming a drunkard," she said, shortly.

"No, no, Dell. You do not understand me. You never do." The father looked the pain he felt, but said no more. Months after, Dell recalled that scene, and her father's words, and understood their meaning then too well.

During the last two months, Mr. Faxon had been forced to see what shocked and alarmed him. His young wife had grown too fond of wine, and drank a great deal too much at dinner. That accounted for her uncontrollable fits of laughter, and loud talking. It was a hard fact for the proud man to acknowledge, but it was true. Mrs. Faxon was a little intoxicated occasionally.

If Mr. Faxon had only banished wine from his table then, he might have saved his wife from the passion that was gaining upon her daily, and himself and only child from the suffering, shame, and remorse that came to them before the New Year.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE HOME IN PARK VIEW AVENUE.*

**E**VEN more really tasteful than either of the homes just described, both in exterior and interior, is the home of Amy Caswell.

Mr. Caswell is a sea captain, and is away from home for months at a time; so Amy and her mother lead a quiet, happy life during his absence.

There is one beauty that graces this home, lacking in either of the others—the grace of Christian love. Mr. and Mrs. Caswell are sincere Christians; and strive by example, as well as by precept, to show their little one that a Christian life is the happiest and best. Nor have their efforts been in vain; for Amy knows that she is a Christian, and has lately gladdened her parents' hearts by that knowledge. How welcome was the message that was brought to Captain Caswell in a tiny letter, over the sea!. Just two little sentences in Amy's handwriting. So simple,

and yet of so much import! "Dear papa, your prayer is answered. Your little Amy knows what it means to say 'My Jesus.'" There were tears of joy in the captain's eyes as he kissed his darling's letter again and again, saying, "Thank God."

"Mamma, dear," Amy said, softly, entering the room where her mother was sitting reading, "I've had such a delightful time. That sweet young lady in Mr. Irving's class is going to be our teacher. She is the one you've spoken of so often—Miss Kathie Danforth. Are you not glad, mamma?"

"Yes, dear, if it makes you happy," and the mother smiled lovingly upon her child, stroking the soft hair.

"It does, mamma. She's so nice. Almost as nice as Mr. Harry Irving. Why, it seems as if I had known her for a long time, she made it so pleasant for us. There are ten of us in the class; five boys and five girls. I like that ever so much, because I think there is more chance of doing good."

Amy was quiet for a few moments, seemingly lost in thought; then said abruptly:

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Amy was quiet for a few moments, seemingly lost in thought; then said abruptly:



"Mamma, I don't see how Miss Danforth had the courage to do one thing she did?"

"What was it, Amy?"

"Why, mamma, she knelt down in the midst of us, before every one in the school, and asked God to help her, and show her what to do, just the same as if she had been in her own room. Don't you think she was brave?"

"Amy, a friend of mine, who has known Miss Danforth for years, says she is naturally very timid, but when she knows she ought to do a thing, she does it. Can you recall a text of Scripture that will meet this case?"

After a little, Amy repeated:

"'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' Is that it, mamma?"

"Yes, Amy."

"You'll be glad of one thing, mamma, I know."

"Is not that rather positive, daughter? I have not had a chance to express an opinion."

"Oh, but, mamma, don't you think every one in Glenwyn knows your opinion upon the temperance question? Don't you think I do?"

"There is certainly no excuse for you if you do not, Amy ; but what have you had about temperance to-day ?"

"You are interested now, mamma, and I believe you could talk temperance to the people just as well as Mr. Lythcombe or Dr. Irving, even if you are a woman, and my mother."

"I could say a good deal, dear, for I am intensely interested in the subject ; but I am afraid that my words would not have much weight ; at least, not as much as any earnest man's."

"Why, mamma, I thought you had a better opinion of yourself than that, and for once I can not agree with you."

"Certainly not. I am Amy Caswell's mother, you know. But what about temperance to-day, dear ?"

"Miss Danforth is a thorough temperance woman, mamma, just as much as you are, I guess ; and she wishes her class to be a temperance class. I felt glad to say that I was already when she put the question to us, and not that I was willing to be. . Luther Greyson was the same as myself ; and all the others, except Dell Faxon and Tom Whiting, were willing. Isn't it splendid, mamma ?"

"Yes, dear, I am very glad. Miss Danforth has begun a good work, and has had wonderful success so far; and, if I judge her rightly, she will prove one of those who are never 'weary in well doing.' I wish that Dell and Tom had been willing too. Perhaps they may think better of it in time. You see that there is work to do. Those of you who are Christians must pray for these two, and strive, by your own example and kindness, to show them that there is nothing quite so grand as being a Christian."

"And you'll help us, mamma, won't you, when the work really begins?"

"I'll do all I can to aid any good work that Miss Danforth may suggest; and you may tell her so next Sunday, if you wish."

"Thank you, mamma. You're just the best mother in the world, and I'll tell Miss Danforth."

"That I am the best mother in the world?" asked the lady, laughing.

"You know I didn't mean that, but I'd just as soon say it as not, for it's true," and a pair of arms encircled the mother's neck, and warm lips kissed her cheek.

"There's the dinner bell, Amy," Mrs. Caswell said, rising. "Come."

The silver shone as brightly, and the good things were just as abundant upon this table as upon either of the others, and yet neither Mrs. Faxon nor Lawyer Whiting would have felt at home here. There was no wine upon this sideboard.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT THE ARNOT'S.*

**D**R. ARNOT'S house was situated upon the corner of Park View and Rose Avenues. It was a large, square house, painted white—not beautiful, but convenient.

Since the death of Dr. Arnot's wife, two years before, his maiden sister, Miss Joanna, had presided as mistress. There was but little sympathy between the doctor and his sister, and still less between the children and their aunt. A strong, active woman, a first-class housekeeper, she proved an excellent manager. She was really kind-hearted, but her inexperience with children unfitted her for any position where there were any; and especially for her present position; for Dr. Arnot's children were all peculiar, and required a person of a loving, sympathizing nature to meet the various peculiarities of each. Such a person their aunt was not; hence the many faults in each child that, during their mother's





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reign they had in part corrected, sprang forth anew; and, instead of growing better, the children were becoming worse every day.

The scene presented this Lord's Day afternoon, as we look in upon them, is only one of the many that have taken place during the last two years, and which, of late, have been of more frequent occurrence.

"Say, Aunt Jo, it's nearly three o'clock, and I don't see any more signs of dinner now than when I went to Sunday-school. Where's father? I'm as hungry as a bear, and I want my dinner. I just hate Sunday; there! Wait and wait and wait, never ready for dinner. Say, Aunt Jo, do you think a fellow has an iron stomach?"

"I think that if you belonged to me, I'd teach you better manners than to shout out like that; and I'll do it too," and irate Aunt Jo raised her hand and brought it down with tremendous force, not against Norman's ear, as she intended, but upon the top of the willow rocker, vacated at that moment by her nephew, which flew back just in time to receive the blow.

Norman roared, and rushed through the open



door to escape the wrath of the angry woman, who cried out with pain.

The door opened just enough to admit Norman's curly pate as he said :

"Cracky! wasn't I a lucky fellow, though, to escape that rap? Would have made me see stars, I guess. Does it hurt, auntie, dear? Shall I get the arnica to bathe it? You see it's a bad plan for an aunt to hit a nephew's ear. Take my advice, and don't try it again."

"Only let me catch you once, Norman Arnot, and you'll pay for this, as sure as my name is Joanna. If Mary Magdalene was possessed with seven devils, you're possessed with ten."

"And my sweet-tempered Aunt Jo, with the old fellow himself, and fifteen little ones. Hurry up the dinner, auntie." The head was withdrawn, and its owner started in pursuit of further mischief.

In the music room, his sister Eve was playing over some of her father's favorite pieces; but what did Norman care for that?

"How long do you intend to keep dinner waiting, Miss Arnot, and how dark do you *wish* father's brow to grow?" Norman bowed

himself in and then out, while Eve jumped up in dismay.

"I hadn't any idea that it was dinner-time, and I'm sure I didn't hear the bell. I do so dread to make father angry. Why auntie, Norman said that dinner was waiting, and father \_\_\_\_\_"

Miss Joanna cut her sentence short.

"Go right back to your music, Eve, and don't come here finding fault. When dinner's ready, you'll hear the bell," and Aunt Jo flounced out of the room, shutting the door with a bang.

"Cross old thing! I'm sure I didn't say anything improper, that she should snap me up in that way. One may as well give up trying to please her, for she won't be pleased. I hope that I shall not be an old maid, if Aunt Jo is a specimen of the best, and——"

Just then she caught a glimpse of Norman out on the veranda.

"You're just as mean as you can be, Norman Arnot. You hate to see any one at peace. I've made Aunt Jo angry again, and all on your account. Just wait, and I'll be even with you yet."

"You looked so comfortable in that cool room, sister mine, playing so softly, with that white kitten in your lap, and such a sweet expression on your face, that I couldn't resist the temptation to see if your temper would ruffle, and clouds take the place of sunshine."

"And you're satisfied now, I suppose; and you call this last mean trick of yours fun, don't you? I declare, you're enough to try the patience of a saint!"

"There's so many of them in this abode."

Norman whistled shrilly for a minute or two, and then continued: "Just let me describe one little scene for your amusement." Norman went through the whole performance, talking rapidly, and laughing aloud when he mimicked Aunt Jo's cry of mingled rage and pain, when her hand struck the chair. Eve enjoyed it, as she always did, when the pranks were played upon somebody else, especially on Aunt Jo.

"That was capital, Norman," she said, laughing. "You'd make a good actor. I'm sorry, though, that I missed seeing the real thing."

"You'll call it square now, won't you, Eve?" Norman inquired, presently, balancing himself

upon one foot. Norman liked to be friendly with Eve; for when Aunt Jo reported his doings to his father, as was frequently the case, Eve always screened him; not because he did not deserve punishment, but just to spite Aunt Jo.

"Yes, of course; but don't try to be too smart, sir," Eve responded, going back to her music.

For a few minutes after Eve left him, Norman kept on balancing, then burst out with: "I wonder what Fan is up to? I haven't set eyes on her since we left Sunday-school. I must go and find out."

He wandered about from room to room, but no trace of Fannie could he find.

"I guess she's out in the garden," he said, at last. "I do wonder what she's up to?"

He went from one place to another, and at last spied something white in the summer-house.

"That's Fan, sure," he said, and hastened to the spot. "Why, Fannie, my love, where have you been? I've hunted all over the house and grounds, hoping to find you, and here you are in the summer-house. What have you been doing since Sunday-school, and what is that great book? No, don't hide it. Let me see the name." Nor-

man took it up, and then put it down again, with a long, low whistle. "Cruden's Concordance! What does that mean, Fan? Are you turning saint too?"

"What do you want, Norman?" Fannie said, crossly. "What do you want, I say? Go away out of here and mind your business. I wonder what boys were made for, anyway?"

"To amuse their little sisters, and to keep them from growing saintly," returned Norman, with a low bow, stepping out with the book under his arm.

"Now, Norman, bring that book back. I'm not through with it. Bring it back, I say," screamed Fannie.

Norman danced upon one leg, put the book upon his head, and marched away. Fannie was too angry to know what she did. Seizing her crutch, she struck at the retreating figure, but finding it beyond her reach, she threw it with all her might. It missed its aim, and landed on the top of a tall lilac-bush, far beyond the child's reach. Norman's laughter increased Fannie's rage, but she could do nothing but scream; and that she did with a will.

Norman, tired of his sport at last, reached up for the crutch, and depositing it and the book at a safe distance from his sister, went off, singing :

Catch me, if you can,  
Saintly little Fan.

Soon after, the doctor came in, and a little later, the dinner-bell rang.

Sunday was the only day the family dined together ; so it ought to have been a pleasant meal, but it rarely was. To-day the doctor was tired and hungry, and in anything but a good humor. Had he been greeted with kind words and loving smiles, his ill-humor would have passed away ; but instead, there was his sister with a face like a thunder-cloud, his eldest daughter cold and indifferent, and his youngest cross and sulky.

Norman looked from one to another, and presently broke out with :

"An interesting family this—warm-hearted, fun-loving, kind, genial, social. Here old Sol shines perpetually, and clouds are never permitted to——"

"Oh, Norman, do stop your nonsense ;" but Eve smiled in spite of herself, and even Aunt Jo's face lost a little of its grimness. Old

Nancy laughed—she always laughed at Norman's sayings—and shook her head at him warningly.

"Norman, pass Fannie's plate," his father said, shortly.

Norman reached forward to obey, but Fannie held on to it with both hands.

"Keep your hands off," she said. "I'll pass it myself."

"Quarreling again?" the doctor inquired. "Will you two ever learn to live in peace?"

"I prefer a piece of the chicken's breast, sir, if you please," and Norman looked wickedly at Fannie.

"Don't open your mouth again, sir, until I speak to you," his father answered, sternly.

Norman looked wistfully at his dinner, but did not eat any. Aunt Jo looked at him inquiringly, and finally asked, impatiently:

"What's the matter with your dinner, Norman, that you don't eat it?"

Norman put his finger upon his lips, but made no reply.

Nancy's fat sides shook so that she nearly dropped the dish she was carrying.

**"Answer your aunt, sir!"** The doctor spoke sharply.

"You told me not to open my mouth, so how could I answer her, and obey you at the same time?"

"Leave the table, instantly," thundered the angry father. "Perhaps fasting will teach you civility."

Norman cast a longing look at the untasted chicken, then rising, slowly left the room. He knew that Nancy would save him some choice bits, as she always did when he was sent away; so he made the best of it, and went to the library in search of a book.



## CHAPTER IX.

### *WIDOW LESTER'S HOME.*

A LITTLE white cottage, of only four rooms, situated far back from the street, and almost hidden in the dense foliage that surrounds it—this is Clare Lester's home. The sweet-faced lady in the doorway is his mother, and the great Newfoundland that bounds down the path to meet him is his dog. Here the three have lived happily since the death of Clare's father, five years before.

Mrs. Lester supports herself and son by teaching music and drawing at Glenwyn Academy. Clare devotes his spare moments out of school, in doing errands for Lawyer Whiting, in whose employ he has been for a year. That gentleman says Clare would make a shrewd lawyer, and has tried his best to persuade Mrs. Lester to think as he does.

At Clare's birth, his father, then in a flourishing business, put seven hundred dollars in the

bank for his son's education, intending to increase it each year. But the firm of which he was junior partner dissolving soon after, he was unable to do so the second year; and each succeeding year of the six that he lived, found him no better able to afford it.

When Clare was seven years old, his father met with an accident which resulted in death, after nine months of great suffering. A short time before he died, he took his little son in his arms, and commended him to God, at the same time expressing the desire, that if it was his will, this dear little son might be converted in youth, and live to preach Christ to the world. Even if a lawyer's profession had not been distasteful to Clare, his father's desire would have sufficed to make it so—the boy's dearest expectation being to fulfill it. So, all Clare earned was added to the little sum in the bank, to be ready for use when the time came.

As Tom Whiting was often in his father's office, out of school hours, the two boys, seeing so much of each other, became fast friends in a short time. Tom thought Clare as nearly perfect as a boy could be, and having no brother of

his own, lavished all his affection upon his friend. And Clare returned it with equal warmth; for, next to his mother, there was nobody whom he loved quite so well as Tom.

"Father has set his heart upon my being a merchant, but I never will be, for I hate it," Tom said in confidence to Clare, a short time after they had become inseparable friends. "I don't know what I shall be, but I do know this: that whatever you are, I will be, unless you should be a merchant."

Then Clare confided his cherished hope to him, and Tom, throwing his arm around his neck, said, quietly:

"All right, Clare; we'll both be ministers, only you'll have to teach me lots of good before the time comes."

Then, boy-like, he asked him how he expected to earn enough money to carry him through college. Of course, Clare told him of the seven hundred deposited in Glenwyn Bank, and of the little sums that had been added since. And Tom—warm-hearted, impulsive Tom—what do you suppose he did? He told Clare that he was glad, and thought he'd have enough by the

time he needed it; but he did something else. One dollar and a half of his two dollars' pocket money was laid by each week, and at the end of each quarter, deposited in bank to Clare's credit.

"I'll help him all I can, dear old fellow, for he deserves it; and I won't miss it much."

That was what Tom said when he had made his third deposit, and left the bank whistling a favorite air.-

"Down, Ponto, old fellow! Don't you see that I've my best clothes on, and your paws are not any too clean. We'll frolic to-morrow, not to-day," said Clare, patting the dog's head; and Ponto, after licking the hand that caressed him, trudged on contentedly at his master's side.


"A teacher who gave satisfaction to-day, my son?" It was the lady in the door-way who spoke, and her brown eyes looked lovingly into the grey ones raised so trustingly to hers.

"She is just splendid. So different from any we ever had. I do hope she'll keep the class until we've all grown up to be men and women."

"Men and women?' Why, are there girls in the class, and who is this wonderful teacher?"

"Miss Kathie Danforth, mother, and one of

the wonders is that it was she who proposed—no, not that word, it isn't strong enough—insisted upon mixing our class and Miss Stephens'. She said she felt confident that it would work, and I believe it will too. Such a worker as she is, mother! And the best of it is, that she has the power of imparting her spirit to others. When she was talking to us, I felt that all the good resolves I had ever made, and all the good impulses I ever felt, formed themselves into one big one; and mother, dear, the result of it all is that I've made up my mind to be a Christian, a thorough temperance Christian, mother, for I've agreed to sign a total abstinence pledge. I've wanted to do that for a long while, for father's sake, and for yours too, mother; but I didn't have the courage, even when Harry Irving urged me to, last winter. I know you're glad, mother, dear. I can read it in your eyes. And Harry'll be glad too. All the boys and girls in the class, except Tom Whiting and Dell Faxon, agreed to sign the pledge, and there are ten of us. A big majority, wasn't it? I wish, though, that Tom had taken the stand now. It will never be as easy again. There, mother, I've



preached quite a sermon, and am almost out of breath; so I'll give you a chance to say something now. Why, mother, a tear? I never meant my mother to shed a tear for me, and here is one on my hand."

"Tears start sometimes when the heart is too full of joy for words, dear. All I can say is, 'Praise the Lord.' He has answered my prayer."

"Mother, I must talk to you now; so please to sit down here where it is cool and quiet. Did you ever hear of any one who became a Christian just after he had made up his mind that he would be? Could there be such a case?"

Clare spoke so earnestly that his mother raised her eyes to his, reading in his face a joy she had never seen there before.

"I have heard of such cases, my son—even witnessed one."

"Then, mother, such an experience has been mine. Your prayer is indeed answered. I am a Christian. When Miss Danforth asked us to be Christians, I longed, oh, so much, to be one; but my life-picture appeared so black, when I looked at it, that it seemed an impossibility. The

more I looked at it, the darker it grew ; and the darker it grew, the more I longed to have it bright. Just after Tom left me, I felt so happy that I had taken the stand for temperance, and that Tom respected me for it. Then came the thought, 'A temperance boy, but not a Christian. Why not a Christian? Why not a Christian now? What is the reason?' And standing there, at the turn of the road, I said aloud, 'Why?' I tried to think of some excuse that would be satisfactory, but I failed utterly. I stood there desolate, forlorn, hopeless, not knowing how to decide, when suddenly I thought of the words of your hymn :

A free gift is offered you,  
Take it while you may ;  
And you'll evermore rejoice  
When you make the Lord your choice.

I was no longer in doubt about what to do. I felt that I must make the choice then and there. I accepted the free gift, and I cannot tell you how thankful I am that the Lord Jesus offered it to me so freely. I only wonder that I did not see how free it was, and how precious, long ago."

## CHAPTER X.

### *THE BLACKSMITH'S FAMILY.*

GRAHAM LINCOLN was the only blacksmith in Glenwyn. His house was a simple, unpretentious, two-story white one, with shop adjoining. Everything about the place spoke of thrift, for the Lincolns were hard working people—simple, honest, just, and generous. No stranger, however forlorn, ever went away from Graham Lincoln's door hungry. He had a large family of his own, one boy and five girls, and he found it hard work to provide for them all comfortably; yet when his two sisters died, each leaving a little girl, he did not hesitate to offer the little orphans a home. So Lotta Grey and Lucia Denham came to live with their Uncle Lincoln, and the five girls were increased to seven. For these generous acts, the people of Glenwyn criticised the blacksmith severely. He, good man, only smiled, and kept on in the same old way.

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The repast to-day was very frugal, but the children were all hungry, so they did the meal ample justice. Simple meals on Sunday were the custom here, in order that Phebe, the hired girl, could have one day in seven to herself.

Lotta and Lucia took great pride in helping their aunt, who was unable to move about quickly, on account of a slight lameness caused by a fall during the winter. It was their duty, too, to look after the three younger children, who were too small to care for themselves. They were so gentle and patient with their little cousins, that they loved them as dearly as if they had been their elder sisters. Lotta especially, was thoughtful beyond her years; so much so that her aunt made her her confidanté in all important matters concerning the family.

After dinner had been eaten and cleared away, and the table set for tea, Lotta took the children out under the trees in the garden, and spent a pleasant hour reading to them, and letting them ask questions about what she read. To-day, the story was about Joseph, and the children were very much interested. Their questions were deep and perplexing, but patient Lotta answered them

to the best of her ability, and was surprised to hear the clock strike five before she had finished.

"It's just the nicest Sunday I ever spent, long as I've lived ; and you're just the nicest cousin-sister that I've got," said little Bessie, cuddling up to Lotta, and laying her rosy cheek to hers. "I love you a whole ocean full, Cousin Lotta ; and if you were a man, I'd marry you."

Archie, who was passing by just then, stopped to laugh at his quaint little sister, saying :

"How do you know she'd have you. A woman can't always get a husband just for the asking."

"I think you'd know better than that, Archie Lincoln ! As if a woman ever did such a bold thing ! If they did, I guess there'd be more single ones than there are now, wouldn't there, Lotta?"

"I shouldn't wonder, dear ;" and Lotta joined in Archie's laugh. Little six-year-old Bessie laughed too, although she declared, presently :

"I'm sure I don't see anything to laugh at."

"Nevertheless, my small sister is laughing too. Why is that?"

"Oh, I always laugh when others do ; and others laugh at nothing so."

"True enough, Bessie; but never mind that now. You've had Lotta ever since Sunday-school let out, so you can spare her now, I think. Besides, I wish to talk over some important plans with her; so run off, like a darling, and see if you can't help them to get supper."

"Certainly. I never stay where I'm not wanted, I can tell you, Archie Lincoln, even if you are my brother," responded Bessie, turning away with an offended air. "I'm going right now, quick as ever I can."

"Don't be cross, missy," and Archie ran after the little figure, put a ripe peach into her hand, and came back to Lotta.

"Now, Lotta, if you can spare me a few minutes, I'll ask your advice about a plan that's come into my head since Sunday-school."

"Thank you, I won't lay up hard feelings nor anything," piped a little voice off in the distance.

"All right," shouted Archie. Then to Lotta, "What a funny little thing she is. Give her something to eat, and sunshine will break through the blackest clouds. Now about my plan.

"You know all of our class but two, pledged

themselves to total abstinence. Well, I've been thinking that a total abstinence society, formed of the boys and girls of our school, would be a good thing to start. What do you think?"

"I think it's an excellent idea, but I wouldn't limit it to the boys and girls of our school alone. I'd swell the number until there wasn't a boy or girl left in Glenwyn to ask."

"Then you'd have it a working organization."

"Yes."

Archie was all excitement.

"I wonder if we couldn't start it at once. There would be no harm in beginning it to-day, because it's Sunday?"

"I can see no harm in doing good on Sunday, and certainly this is a good work."

"Then you'll help me."

"Of course. There's almost an hour before tea-time, and, if you wish, we'll begin at once."

"Don't you think it would be well to tell Lucia, and see what she thinks of it?"

"Yes; she is coming now. Shall I tell her?"

"Yes, please."

Lucia entered heartily into the plan, so Lotta went into the house for paper and pencils.

When she returned, the three seated themselves under the oaks, and began to work.

"I think," said Lucia, "that uncle and aunt ought to be consulted when we have drawn up a pledge that we think suitable."

"Of course," returned Archie; "and father will give us some good suggestions, no doubt."

"I think, too, that we ought to ask Miss Danforth's advice," said Lotta.

"Yes ; because it is the result of her temperance talk. Don't you think, girls, that we can start a little earlier than usual for meeting to-night, and call round in time to meet Miss Danforth ? We could tell her of our plans as we went along."

"All right. Now for the pledge. You must word it, Archie, and we'll sign it."

Archie's pencil wrote rapidly for a few moments ; then he inquired :

"How will this do?"

"Read it," said the girls ; and Archie read :

"For the sake of others, we, who sign our names to this paper, pledge ourselves to neither taste, touch, nor to have anything to do with anything that contains alcohol."

"That will do," said Lucia, "because it covers everything."

"Yes," added Lotta. "Now sign your name at the left, and we'll write ours at the right."

When the names were written, Archie folded the paper, and asked:

"What would be a good name for our society?"

"How would 'The Boys' and Girls' Temperance Society' sound?" suggested Lotta.

"It would sound well," returned Lucia; "but I don't think it would be quite the right name. If you confine it to boys and girls, there would be no chance for those older than we are to join; and surely you will try to persuade Eve Arnot and Leslie Whiting to sign their names?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Archie. "That name won't do, I see; because, as Lucia says, it would hinder older persons from joining us."

"'The Young People's Temperance Union' would make it all right," resumed Lucia, after a moment's thought.

"Good for you, Lu! That's just the thing. Couldn't be improved," cried Archie.

"I wonder——" said Lotta, then paused.

"Well, what is it you wonder? Out with it," said Archie.

"You know all societies have a President——"

"Yes."

"Well, I was wondering if Miss Danforth would consent to be our President. She isn't much older than Eve or Leslie."

"I hope she will," observed Lucia. "It would be so nice to have a President that we love already."

"She's just the person for a President," said Archie; "and I believe that she'll consent."

"We'll ask her, anyway," said Lucia. "Why, there's Bessie coming. I suppose tea's ready. Well, Bessie, what is wanted?"

"You, and you, and you, to come directly in to supper, or may be I'll eat it all up, 'cause I'm awful hungry." Having delivered this message, the child turned and walked away.

"Hold on, Bessie!" cried Archie. "We're coming. Hold on, I say."

Bessie laughed, and without turning her head, went on towards the house, leaving the others to follow.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *THE DRUNKARD GREYSON'S HOME.*

IT was a miserable place that Luther Greyson called home. As he sauntered along the narrow, ill-kept street or court that approached it, he compared it again and again with the homes of his companions, and wished that it were different. When he reached the gate, or rather the opening where a gate had once been, he leaned upon the tottering fence, and surveyed the homely scene.

The house, a story and a half cottage, stood in the centre of about half an acre of land. It had once been white with green blinds, but now it was hard to determine its color. The ground was so run over with weeds and briers, that the few straggling rose-bushes, and two stunted apple trees, upon which were a few sickly looking apples, and which tried to grow in spite of neglect, were scarcely visible.

Luther groaned as he saw it all again, and



with bitter feelings toward his uncle, the cause of all his misery, pushed his way through the opening, and entered the room. Within, the scene was even more cheerless. A long, lean woman, with hollow cheeks and sunken eyes, bent over the remains of an old rocking-chair that served the purpose of a cradle, within which a miserable, emaciated infant kept up an incessant whine. In one corner of the room, a table with one leaf was set for dinner, if dry bread and oat-meal porridge could be called such. Yet the time had been when the mistress of this poor home had moved in the first circles of society, and had enjoyed every comfort that money could procure.

To-day was the tenth anniversary of her wedding; and that was the reason she was recalling the past, as she sat there, rocking her fretful babe. Ten years before, he whom she called husband, had led her to the altar, a beautiful, blushing girl of twenty. He had promised the aged parents to love and cherish their only darling, when he took her from her beautiful home to one even more beautiful, and installed her as its mistress.

She knew that John Greyson occasionally took a glass of wine with his friends, but such a thing as his becoming a drunkard had never entered her mind. Still, she had remonstrated with him ; but he had only laughed, and told her she should have her way as soon as she became Mrs. Greyson. For a few months, her husband had been all she could desire ; then business called him away suddenly, and when he returned, after an absence of some weeks, his young wife saw with horror that he was just recovering from the effects of a spree.

As months passed on, it became quite common for him to pass a part, if not the whole, of the night away from home. He was no longer kind and thoughtful, but fault-finding and fretful. Before the first anniversary of their wedding-day, they had had at least a dozen quarrels. Home was no longer a place of peace and love, but of coldness and discord. In vain the aged parents pleaded with their daughter to leave her husband, and return to the home of her youth.

Two years after their marriage, a tiny, blue-eyed baby-girl came to brighten the poor mother's life ; but before it had learned to lisp

"mamma," the blue eyes looked their last upon earth, and the sad mother was alone.

After little Etta's death, the troubles came thick and fast. The beautiful home was sold to pay the creditors, and the remnant helped to purchase the house in which they now lived. It was fresh and pretty enough then, with well-kept ground, and vine-covered porch; and once more the young wife dared to hope—for her husband was kinder, and spent more time at home.

About this time, John Greyson's only brother, a widower with one child, a little boy between six and seven, came to visit them. Being in poor health, he resolved to travel, leaving his son with his brother's wife, imploring her to keep and care for him as her own, if he should never return. A few months after his departure, news reached them of his death; so little Luther became the comfort of his aunt's life.

For six months, John Greyson let rum alone; then an event happened that caused him to plunge into it deeper than ever. His wife's parents were thrown from their carriage, and instantly killed; so their fine residence became the property of the Greysons. They went to

live there in the fall, and there a little son was born to them. It would have been better if he had not been born; for he was an idiot.


John Greyson idolized the child; and when the news was broken to him by the old, grey-haired doctor who had examined him, he was almost frantic with grief. For weeks he shut himself up, refusing to see any one; then, to drown his sorrow, drank until he was in a drunken stupor. Darker days followed. John Greyson became a hopeless drunkard. In spite of poor Alice's tears, the home of her childhood passed into other hands, and they went again to their present home. In the years of suffering that followed, four daughters had been sent to them; but only one survived, the pitiful infant in the chair. For this one, too, the mother would gladly have welcomed death. The poor baby, however, seemed to wish to live, and fought bravely for its little life.

As Luther stood upon the threshold, he abhorred more than ever the four rough wooden chairs, and the three-legged stove, propped up with bricks to keep it from falling, the dingy room with its smoky ceiling and creaky floor.

A hasty step caused a loose board to rise and fall with a bang that frightened the baby, causing its whine to break out into a pitiful wail.

"Poor little Nina, don't cry so. Lutie didn't mean to frighten you. There, there, baby. Let me take her, Aunt Alice, while you help Artie. Come Artie, little man, get your chair and eat your dinner, and, by-and-by, I'll take you out in the park for a change."

The child, a little boy of seven, who was sitting upon a block of wood in a corner, looking at the pictures in a dilapidated primer, glanced up upon hearing his name. The face was very beautiful, with its delicately chiseled features, blue eyes, fringed with long golden lashes, and rings of silken hair that clustered upon the white forehead; but the eyes raised to Luther's lacked expression, and the silly laugh with which he answered him, caused the boy to shudder, as he often did when he was forced to remember that his little cousin, with his beautiful face, was an idiot. And yet the love that existed between the cousins was something rare and beautiful. The love that his father had once felt for the child was buried with the past.



He never kissed or caressed him; neither did he abuse him, except by cruel words; but the boy was either not sensitive enough, or too silly, to heed them; for he loved his wretched father passionately, and would do anything in the world to please him.

Something in his father's manners during his sober moments, kept Arthur from approaching him; but when he lay upon the bed in a drunken stupor, from which nothing could rouse him, as was very frequently the case, the child would steal softly into the room on tiptoe, and look with mingled love and fear upon the insensible form. Occasionally, after looking a long time, the child would cry softly to himself; and twice, when Luther had gone in to take him away, he had found him kneeling by the bedside, saying, in the midst of his sobs, "O Lord! O Lord!"

Sometimes the little fellow would climb up on the side of the bed, stroke the matted hair, kiss the forehead of the unconscious sleeper, lay his white cheek to the bloated one, rest his little hand at the side of his father's lips, to keep off the bad odor, and lie for an hour at a time,

apparently as unconscious to all around him as his father.

If the wretched man could only have roused himself from his lethargy, and found his child thus, his pure, unselfish love and trust might have found its way to the father's heart, if he still had one, and once more awakened the old affection, or done something towards reclaiming him; but he did not, and little Artie loved on unloved.

"Has Uncle John been in since morning?" Luther asked, when he had quieted the baby's cries.

"Yes; don't you miss anything?" asked the poor woman with a stifled sob. "It's no use, Luther. No use at all."

"Oh, Aunt Alice, my clock! The clock that Mr. Lythcombe gave me! Did he dare to take that? Did he dare?" cried the boy in consternation.

"Lutie, dear, there's nothing that he dares not do. He came back about an hour ago, and asked for money. I had none to give him, and he acted like a madman. He had taken just enough liquor to make him a fiend. He turned

everything topsy-turvy hunting for money that he swore I had hidden, and when he couldn't find it, he seized the clock, and said: 'I'll get money some way; you'll not cheat me.' I tried to reason with him, but he would not listen. Then I tried to take the clock from him, and, oh, Luther, he—he struck me! He was never so bad as that before. He never struck me until to-day. Oh, John, to think it has come to this!" Overcome by distress of mind, the poor wife sank into a chair, and sobbed out her anguish.

Luther's face was dark with suppressed passion, and his eyes blazed like fire.

"The brute!" he muttered between his set teeth. "He'll pay for this. Oh, that I were a man! To strike a woman, the miserable coward. Aunt Alice, can't we go away from here, you and I and the children? I'll leave school and go to work, if we can only get where he can't come. I hate him! Yes, I do, when I think of all you have suffered for his sake; and to think that he struck you. I could have forgiven him anything but that. Aunt Alice, your life is in danger if you stay here. You ought



to go away for the children's sake. Will you, Aunt Alice?"

"Luther, you don't know what you ask. All that you say is true enough; but still he is my husband. I cannot leave him. I must live on, and endure suffering, pain, anything. I must not, I cannot leave him. Oh, child, help me!"

There was a great commotion outside, but all within were so excited that no one heard it but Arthur. He dropped his book and went to stand in the half-open doorway. Presently he came running back to Luther.

"Lutie, Lutie! see, see! lots men, lots men!" Taking hold of Luther's jacket, he pulled him towards the door. One glance was sufficient to tell the story. The crowd were approaching the cottage, and the burden they were bearing was his uncle. Something dreadful had happened. Perhaps his uncle was already dead. All the bitter feelings of a few minutes before were gone, and he felt only compassion for the poor wretch. Placing Nina in the chair, he approached his aunt, and, throwing his arms around her, said gently:

"Auntie, something has happened to uncle.

They are bringing him here. Is the bed ready?"

The poor woman, who only half comprehended what Luther was saying, cried wildly;

"Oh, John! Luther, what is it? Where is he?"

"Dear Aunt Alice, try and be calm. The men are bringing uncle home. Something has happened, I'm afraid. Get the bed ready, and I'll go and meet them."

He did not have to go far. Already the crowd were at the gateway. Luther stepped up to the foremost man, and inquired:

"What has happened? Who are they bringing here?"

"It's yer uncle, bye. And a burnin' shame it is too, sure. The poor fool drank until his wits were gone intirely; thin they dared him to ride old Mooney's black mare, the spalpeens. He did git on the baste's back, but she threw him, and trampled him most to death with her hoofs. She's a very demon, that black mare of Mooney's. As soon as we got yer uncle out, we took him to Dr. Foster's; but the doctor says his chances of life are small. So we've brought him home,

poor fellow. Such a likely chap as he'd be, if he'd only let rum alone."

"Poor Aunt Alice!" Luther said to himself. Then, to the man who had been speaking, "Have pity upon my aunt, Mike, and don't let the crowd come in here. Send them away, and I'll do you a good turn one of these days."

Mike spoke a few words in a low tone to the men who carried John Greyson, and forcing the crowd aside, made a passage for them to enter. Luther led the way, and his uncle was brought in, and laid upon the bed in an insensible condition.

"John, poor John! Is he dead, Luther? Is my husband dead?" cried Mrs. Greyson, wringing her hands, and looking into the white face upon the pillow.

"No, Aunt Alice, he isn't dead; but the doctor says he may die. I'll go for Dr. Arnot myself, and see what can be done. I like him better than Dr. Foster." Seizing his hat, Luther stopped for a few moments to pet Arthur, then hastened away in the direction of Dr. Arnot's.

## CHAPTER XII.

### *FANNIE'S DECISION.*

THE family had just gathered around the tea-table Sunday evening, at the Arnot's, when the doctor came in. He looked troubled about something, and said, with great earnestness:

"Norman, I'm very glad that you and Fannie have taken a stand for temperance."

Norman flushed with pleasure, but said nothing. He rarely received commendation from his father, and was at a loss what to say.

"Oh, papa," exclaimed Fannie, "are you really pleased? How did you find it out?"

"Luther Greyson. He came here, just after dinner, for me to go to his uncle, who has met with an accident. Poor wretch! Rum will be the death of him yet; as it is, I hardly think he can live." Dr. Arnot then gave the particulars of the story, observing at its close: "I wish something could be done for Luther. He is a noble boy, and I am very much interested in him."

"Pity you hadn't a little of the same interest in your own son," retorted Aunt Jo, tartly.

For once the doctor made no reply. He was too sad to quarrel, but his sister's words were not lost upon him. He thought them over as he sat in his study that evening, and his thoughts were the means of forcing him to see that he had not done everything in his power to make the children love and trust him. Although it was not pleasant, he was obliged to acknowledge that he had been selfish. He had not entered into all their childish griefs and joys as their mother would have done. The doctor sighed.

"I must do better by them," he said at last, and acting upon the impulse of the moment, he opened his study door, and called Norman.

Receiving no reply, he called again, louder than before. At last the parlor door opened slowly, and Eve's voice inquired, impatiently:

"What's wanted?"

"Where's Norman?"

"I don't know. He went out after tea, and hasn't come in yet."

"Where did he go? Did you ask him?"

"Certainly not. Why should I?"

"I do wish, Eve, that you would show a little sisterly interest in your brother. Boys don't learn any good by spending their evenings away from home."

"Norman is all right. You can trust him. Besides, he wouldn't thank me for meddling with his affairs."

Shortly after, Norman came in, and tossing his hat upon the lounge, knocked down a book that Eve had laid open upon it when she had gone, a few minutes before, to answer her father's call.

"Just like you, Norman Arnot," she cried out. "I do wish you'd learn to leave your hat in the hall. Father's just been calling you, and is displeased because you are out so much evenings. He is in his study, waiting for you."

"I'd a sight rather go to bed, than go in there," returned Norman, angrily. Then he picked up his hat, twirled it in his fingers, and finally started off for the library. He hesitated at the door.

"What a goose I am!" he thought to himself, knocking on the door.

"Come in," responded a voice.

Norman opened the door, and without looking at his father, said :

“Eve told me you wanted me, sir.”

Dr. Arnot, looking up, said kindly :

“I’m going to Lockwood to-morrow morning, to be gone all day, and perhaps you’d like to go with me? The drive is very pleasant, and there’s plenty to see. Do you care to go?”

Norman’s eyes danced with delight.

“Oh, thank you, sir. It is kind in you to think of me. It’ll be just splendid. I’ve always longed to go to Lockwood, and to think I’m really going—whew!”

Dr. Arnot looked amused, then said, quietly:

“You might have gone long ago, if you had only said you wished to. Why didn’t you, Norman?”

Norman didn’t know what to say. He colored violently, looked down, then at his father, then down again, heartily wishing he had not been asked that question.

The doctor, pitying his distress, said almost tenderly:

“Come here, my boy.” Encircling his son with his arm, an unusual act for Dr. Arnot,

he looked down into the flushed face, and inquired: "Was it because you thought I didn't care for your company?"

"Yes, sir," said Norman, in a low voice.

"Oh, Norman, how could you?"

Norman could not help noticing the pain in his parent's voice.

"I didn't mean to tell you, father, but you asked me."

"True, and perhaps it is better for me to know; but remember this, Norman, I don't always show all I feel; but I do feel, and I love my children too. It has been so different since your mother died. I've been so busy, and when at home, so lonesome, for my children always avoid me, that home no longer seems like home to me."

Norman did then what he had not done for months. He put his arms around his father's neck, and kissed him, and tears that he could not keep back, filled his eyes. Dr. Arnot returned the embrace warmly, then said:

"We'll do better in the future, Norman, you and I. I am afraid I have not understood you as I ought, but you won't be afraid to come to



me now, with your joys and troubles, will you?"

"Never again, father. May I begin to-night?"

"You may."

All Norman's diffidence vanished. He told his father all he hoped to do and be in the future, and found in him, sympathizer, friend, and counselor. Then he told him of funny pranks that the boys played at school, and two or three times, when the picture was very ludicrous, the doctor laughed aloud. The clock upon the mantel struck nine while Norman was talking. Both looked up surprised. The evening had passed so quickly and pleasantly, that neither was aware of the lateness of the hour.

"I'll finish to-morrow, father; for, if I am to be up at five, it's time to say good-night."

Norman went up-stairs with a light heart. He felt very happy. As he reached the landing, Fannie's door opened, and Fannie's voice said, gently:

"Will you step in here a moment, please, Norman; I've something to tell you?"

Norman felt so happy himself that he forgot

to notice the unusual "please" in Fannie's sentence, and to comment upon it. He entered the room, and, taking a seat by the open window, he waited for Fannie to speak. He did not have to wait long, for Fannie spoke at once.

"Oh, Norman, I'm so glad that you've come up at last! I've been waiting ever and ever so long. I've made a decision—the most important one in my life, and I've just been aching to tell somebody."

"You might have told Eve," suggested Norman, feeling the importance of being chosen instead of his sister.

"I'd rather tell you, because you're nearer my age, and will understand me better. Besides, Eve would ask so many questions; and, Norman, it's a question that you've heard about to-day, as well as I, and I thought perhaps you might be interested too."

"I am interested to know what the decision you have made is, Fannie. I can tell better about myself when I know."

Fannie was flushed with excitement. Taking a step forward, she leaned upon her crutch with both hands, and said, slowly:

"Norman, I've decided to be a temperance Christian."

Norman was so surprised that he jumped up, looked at her for a full half minute, sat down again, and finally inquired:

"Really and truly, Fan?"

"Really and truly, Norman; but I don't know what I ought to do, or how to do it."


"I'm glad of it, truly glad; and if I——"

"You horrid boy! I'm sorry now I told you. I might have known you'd say something to make me angry, and I meant not to get angry any more with anybody."

Tears dimmed the child's eyes, and she turned away to hide them. In a moment Norman was at her side.

"I didn't mean what you think, Fannie. I meant that I was glad that you had decided the question in the best way, and I was going to say, that if I knew how, I'd help you, but I don't know any better than you. I almost wish I dared to decide as you have."

"Oh, Norman, do! then we can help each other. But I'm so hateful, and cross, and impatient, that no one can love me, or be my



friend. Oh, dear, how I miss mamma! I'm so lonesome, Norman. If she was only here, I could go to her, and tell her everything, and she'd help me, as she always did. Oh, mamma, how I wish you'd come back to me again! Your little girl is so unhappy."

The eyes of both children sought the face of their mother, whose kindly eyes looked down upon them from the wall. To Norman, it seemed that the eyes looked sadly upon him. He remembered the words she had said to him so often in life, when he had been teasing Fannie: "My son, be kind to your little sister." How often he had been unkind, and how seldom kind, to afflicted little Fannie! Only that afternoon he had been so cruel to her. He felt both shame and sorrow as he recalled it. What a mean sort of fun it was to pain another weaker than himself! He resolved that he would never be guilty of so unkind an act again. Somehow, he felt different to-night from what he ever remembered feeling before, but he could not account for it. He did not know—how could he?—that his earnest young teacher was just then pleading for him and Fannie.

"Say, Fan," Norman said, in his blunt manner, "I want you to forgive all the mean things I've done since—since—" a choking in his throat—"mother died. I haven't done a bit as she would have wished, but I'm sorry, and I mean to do better. I didn't think of anything but fun when I teased you, but I see now how mean it was. I think—I wish—Fan, I'll begin with you, and we'll be temperance Christians together; and, Fannie, let us love one another more, for mother's sake."

"Can you, Norman? Will you love me?"

"Of course I can; I do, Fannie. Aren't you my sister?"

"Yes—but—oh, Norman——"

Fannie's voice was choked with sobs. She couldn't say any more.

"Never mind, little sister. I love you, and I'll be good to you as long as I live," and Norman drew the child's face down, and kissed her. "I'll tell you what, Fan. Just go to father, and tell him how you feel, and he'll help you." Then he told his sister of that evening's interview with his father, in the library. "I wish you'd go, Fannie. I know he'd help you."

Fannie only shook her head. Norman was thoughtful for a few moments, then said quickly, as if the thought was new to him:

"There's Eve, Fan. She's been a Christian for more than a year. Surely she can help you."

Fannie looked a little more hopeful.

"Yes," she said, "but I'm afraid she can't help me. Besides, I don't like to bother her."

"I would, Fan. It's the duty of one Christian to help another, so Eve ought to be glad of the opportunity. You'd better try her."

"Well, I will, Norman. The first chance I get to-morrow. I'd like to to-night, but it's too late. Good-night, Norman. You've done me ever so much good."

"Poor little thing!" thought Norman, as he sought his room. "I mean to do as much to make her happy, as I did to make her miserable in the past."

The good seed sown in Norman's heart, that day, by patient Kathie, had already begun to bear. May it yield a rich harvest!

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *FANNIE SEEKING LIGHT.*

SEVERAL days passed after Fannie's talk with Norman before she found the opportunity she wanted for seeking Eve's advice. Callers had just left, and Eve had picked up the book she had been reading, and was about to return to the summer-house to resume her story, when Fannie, who had seen the visitors take their leave, and knew that her sister was alone in the parlor, entered the room.

"Eve, can you spare me a few minutes?" she said.

Eve looked astonished, but said, quietly:

"Certainly, Fannie, if it is necessary. What do you want?"

"Not here, Eve," she said. "Here we might be interrupted. Can't I go to the summer-house with you?"

"Of course, if you would rather," and without waiting for further words, Eve led the way.

Making herself comfortable on a seat, she looked inquiringly at her sister.

Fannie's heart beat fast. She disliked the thought of telling Eve how she felt, but her intense longing for help gave her courage.

"Eve, I want to be a Christian, but I don't know how, and I thought that may be you would help me, because you're a Christian, you know."

Had Fannie told Eve that she wished to die, she could not have been more astonished. After some time, she said:

"I would not have thought of such a thing when I was your age, Fannie. I think you are much too young to understand what it means to be a Christian."

"I'm not too young to die, Eve. I'm sure that if I should die as I am, I couldn't go to heaven, and I want to be at peace with God," returned the child, earnestly.

"You don't look much like a dying child," answered Eve, lightly; "but since you are so anxious to do better, I'll do what I can for you in the way of advice. You know you have lots of faults—some of them very serious ones—fretfulness, and selfishness, and impatience, and



carelessness, and, worst of all, a hasty temper. You fly into a passion at a moment's notice. My advice would be to take one thing at a time, and conquer it. Your temper, for instance. That's the way I did, and I found it much easier than trying to do too much at once. When you have your temper under your control, you will have fought the hardest part of the battle. Then you may advance a step further, and take something else. Still, as I said before, I think you are much too young to think about conversion now."

"But, Eve, I thought it was so much easier, not nearly as hard as you make it out."

"You'll find it a battle all the way through," rejoined Eve, taking up her book, thus showing that the interview was over.

On her way from the summer-house, Fannie met Norman, who had come in search of her.

"You don't look very happy, Fan. What's up?"

"Nothing, only I'm discouraged," and she gave Norman an account of her talk with Eve.

"A very dismal picture Eve makes of the Christian life, to be sure," Norman remarked,

when she had finished. "But I wouldn't be discouraged, Fan. It seems to me that there must be a better way than Eve's. You know Dr. Irving says a Christian ought to be one of the happiest people in the world, and if not, there's something wrong. You remember that, don't you?"

"Yes, I believe so."

"And you remember those verses he quotes so often: 'Ye are the light of the world,' and 'Let your light shine?' You see that Christians are lights, and God commands them to shine. Now it seems to me, Fan, that Eve's light doesn't shine as brightly as it ought to, or you and I would have been Christians long ago."

"But, Norman, Eve does lots of good."


"I didn't say that Eve didn't do good, but that, as a light, she ought to shine brighter. Do you remember that night when you and I went to meeting for fun, and how we laughed at old Deacon Ellis? 'I don't want any of yer new-fangled notions. I jest want the good old whole-souled religion. Nothing more or less.' Well, Fan, that's just what I want when I'm converted."

"So do I, Norman, but I don't see how I'm going to get it; for all that Eve said about my faults is true; and if I correct them one by one, I shall be an old woman before I'm half through."

They walked along in silence for a few minutes, then Norman burst out with :

"I have it, Fan, sure's I'm alive! Cousin Harry came home yesterday. He is a bright light, I can tell you. Ask him, and he'll tell you, if any one can. But I wouldn't go just yet, for Miss Danforth went in just as I passed by. I'll tell you a secret, Fan, that Tom Whiting told me, but you mustn't lisp a word to any one. Miss Danforth and Cousin Harry are engaged. Won't it be splendid to have her for a cousin?"

For nearly an hour the children wandered up and down on the shore of the lake. Then Norman proposed to return. When they reached the parsonage, Harry Irving was reading upon the veranda. Norman whispered a few words to Fannie, then left her to enter alone, while he walked thoughtfully homeward.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### *FANNIE ACCEPTING THE FREE GIFT.*

THE click of the gate-latch caused Harry to look up. Dropping his book, he hurried down the steps to meet his cousin, saying:

"I hardly expected you so soon, Fannie. You are very thoughtful. Come and sit with me upon the veranda. It is cool and pleasant there. That is right. Now let me look at you. Why, little cousin, you don't seem to have gained any since I saw you last, and you look troubled. Perhaps I can help you. You'll let me try, won't you?"

"I'm just as unhappy as I can be, Harry; and I shall be glad to have you help me, if you can."

"I am very sorry you are unhappy, Fannie. Tell me all about it, and let me see if I can smooth over the difficulty."

Harry's eyes were so full of tender sympathy, and his voice so kind, that Fannie felt at ease, and came to the point at once.


"We want to be Christians, Norman and I; but we don't know how to begin."

"I'm very, very glad, Fannie. I can't begin to tell you how glad I am."

"I thought you'd be glad, Harry."

Then Fannie gave him a brief account of all that had transpired during the week. He listened without interrupting her, until she had finished, and then said:

"I am sorry that the Christian life has been misrepresented to you, dear child, when it is so easy, so simple, so beautiful. I'm sorry, too, that you have had such a struggle, and so much to discourage you. It ought not to have been. It need be no longer. Fannie, when God sent his only Son into this world, it was for a purpose. When that Son died upon the cross, he made an offering for all the sins that I ever committed, or that you ever committed, all the sins that millions who are yet unborn will ever commit, and now we are told that the blood he shed cleanseth us from all sin. Do you remember when you were quite a little girl, how much you admired a string of gold beads that belonged to Eve?"



"Yes," answered Fannie, wondering what that had to do with being a Christian.

"Well," continued Harry, "when your sixth birthday came round, and Aunt Fannie bought some beads just like Eve's, and gave them to you, you didn't just look at them, and then turn aside, saying: 'Why, mamma, you can't mean that these are for me.' No, you said: 'Thank you, dear mamma. I'll keep these beads as long as I live, because you gave them to me.' Now, Fannie, you don't think your mother was sorry, after she had given you such an expensive present, do you?"

"What a question, Cousin Harry. You know she wasn't. She gave them to me freely."

"Why did she give them freely, Fannie?"

"Because she loved me."

"You never doubted that your mother loved you, did you, dear?"

"Doubted mamma, Harry, doubted my darling mamma? Never! never in all the world! I know she loved me. I could see it in her eyes, in her face, in everything she did. My dear, precious mamma! I know she loved me."

"And so do I know it, Fannie, and she loves

you now even more than she did then. But there is another who loves you far better than your mother ever did. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' It was a free gift of love. Just think what a love that must have been!

His is an unchanging love,  
Higher than the heights above,  
Deeper than the depths beneath,  
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Fannie, 'the world' includes you; the 'who-soever' means you. God offers his great gift of love to you freely. Will you take it? It is the rarest gift—one which money cannot purchase—the best of all gifts; and it is yours by simply reaching out and taking it. Do you wish it, Fannie? Will you take it?"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

"Then kneel down here with me, and repeat the words I say after me."

The child obeyed.

"You must remember that you mean the words you say."

"Yes, Harry."

"O Lord, I will take the gift of love that you offer me freely. I will take Jesus for my Saviour. Amen."

Slowly the young man pronounced the words, his cousin repeating them after him. Then he raised the child, kissed her tenderly, and, after a little silence, looking into the radiant face, asked:

"Well, Fannie?"

"Oh, Harry, it's mine, all mine, the free gift. I see it so plainly now. And I'm very thankful; and it makes me feel so happy. I was very miserable when I came here, and now I feel so different; just as if a stone had been on me, and some one had lifted it off. I can't explain it, but I know the gift is mine, and I'll keep it forever. Last Sunday night, Harry, when they sang the hymn that begins:

Fade, fade, each earthly joy,  
Jesus is mine,

I couldn't sing; for it seemed false, when he was nothing at all to me; but I can sing it now. I'm so glad."

"Now, Fannie, let me say a few words about 'the battle all the way through,' that Eve mentioned. There are battles to fight; but we are



not expected to face the enemy alone. Jesus, our Captain, goes before us. All we have to do is to follow in his footsteps, and obey his orders. When difficulties and perplexities arise, as they do sometimes, don't wait and wonder and worry about them, but take them to Jesus right away, and he will help you, for he never breaks his word. Keep fast hold of his hand, and keep your light burning always. I hope, when I see you again, that Norman will be able to say that he, too, has accepted the gift. Good-bye, Fannie."

"Good-bye, Harry. I'm so glad I came."

## CHAPTER XV.

### *LETTING THE LIGHT SHINE.*

**H**ALF an hour later, Fannie entered the kitchen, where she found Nancy, with her hand in cold water, groaning with pain. Yesterday she would have passed on without comment, but now the good prompter said: "Let the light shine." Fannie heeded the voice.

"What's happened, Nancy?" she said.

"I've scalded my hand; but much you'd care if I scalded my heels," was the ungracious reply.

Fannie felt like going out and slamming the door; but again the good voice whispered its caution; and again Fannie obeyed it.

"I'm not quite so bad as that, Nancy. I was scalded myself once, and I know how painful it is. I'm truly sorry for you."

"Well, your sorrow won't set the table, nor tend the biscuit, nor do a score of other things that must be done before supper will be ready, so you might as well keep it to home."

Fannie turned away, she was so afraid the angry words would come. She stood in the doorway a moment, then came back to Nancy.

"Perhaps I could help you tend the biscuit, and set the table, if you told me how, Nancy."

"You!" Nancy forgot her pain for a moment, and turned round to look at Fannie. The "you" she uttered, expressed volumes.

"I might carry the dishes if you hand them to me," persisted Fannie.

"Well, so you might," said Nancy, relenting. "But, first, you may open the oven door, so that I can get a peep at the rolls. Take the holder, and turn the knob to the left. That's right. Yes, they're done enough. Stand aside now, so that I can take them out. No, no, you might get burnt," as Fannie offered her help. "I'll do that, myself. You may take them to the table when they're cool enough."

There were a good many steps between the dining-room and pantry, and Fannie went back and forth at least a dozen times, before the task of setting the table was completed. Her feet ached, but her heart was glad, and Nancy's words of praise increased her joy.



Kathie's Views.



"You can be quite handy when you like, child; and the table looks just as well as if I had done it myself. I'm sure I'm much obliged to you."

"I'm very glad that I could help you, Nancy," Fannie returned, as she passed into the hall.

The door of the hall-closet was ajar. Going to close it, she saw her father's dressing-gown and slippers in their proper places, just where he had put them that morning.

"Poor papa! he has to wait upon himself now," thought Fannie, as she saw them; and she recalled the time, when the dear hands, now still, had always had them ready for him. "Why shouldn't I do it? I wonder if it would please papa?" she questioned. "I'll do it, anyway."

Arming herself with both, she passed through the hall to the library. The sun had gone from that side of the house, so she threw open the shutters, admitting the cool evening air. Next, she drew her father's chair to the open window, and placed his slippers on the foot-rest, and the dressing-gown over the arm of the chair.

"Now I guess papa'll be comfortable for one night, at least. Oh, the evening paper! I

wonder if it's come?" Finding that it had, she placed it upon the window-seat.

"Now is there anything else? Yes, those vases would look better if they had some flowers in them, and there are plenty in the garden."


In ten minutes she was back again with the prettiest flowers she could find. Then the vases had to be filled with water, and when that had been done, and the flowers arranged tastefully, the little girl could not help feeling pleased with her work. Just then she heard Norman's voice:

"I know it's all right, Fan. I see it in your face. I declare you're almost pretty to-night. Come out under the elms, and tell me about it."

The sun went down behind the trees, and the evening shadows gathered, yet the two children lingered under the elms. Fannie had related, in her childish way, all that had taken place at the parsonage that afternoon, and was urging Norman to decide then, when the supper bell rang.

"I'll settle that question before I sleep, Fannie," the boy whispered, as they entered the room together.

Dr. Arnot was already there, in dressing-gown and slippers. He looked very tired, but greeted



them so pleasantly, that Fannie wondered why she had ever been afraid of him.

Directly after tea, Norman sought the solitude of his own room, there to decide the most important question of his life. As he sat with bowed head, thinking over what Fannie had told, and the great joy that had come to her, he uttered his first real prayer: "Lord, give me a submissive spirit." After that, it was very easy to do as Fannie had done—accept the free gift; and then the same joy was his.

Norman could never keep anything to himself; so in his eagerness to make this known, he rushed down-stairs, two steps at a time. At the foot, he encountered Eve, who exclaimed:

"What *are* you trying to do, Norman?"

"Eve, I feel happier to-night than ever I did before in all my life, and I want to make it known; that's all."

"Seems to me I'd make a little less noise about it, if I were you," and Eve passed on.

It was Fannie whom Norman wished to see; so he went out to the veranda, where his sister usually sat after tea. Fannie was there in the old place. He hastened to her, saying:



"The decision was not a hard one, Fan, and I think it is made. Father is in the library. Shall we go together, and tell him? I know he'll be glad."

"Yes, let us go now."

Dr. Arnot smiled a welcome, as the two children entered the library a minute later. He did not seem surprised, for Fannie's sunshiny face, and Norman's determined one, at the tea-table, told him that he might expect something.

"Papa," said the boy, going to his father's side, "I have some good news for you. Fannie and I want now to be always on the Lord's side."

"I'm very glad to hear it, children. May the Lord give you strength," holding out a hand to each. "May you be very happy. Look forward, and not backward, and do all the good you can. God bless you both."

Before going to rest, Fannie sought Eve. The one desire of the timid, diffident child seemed to be to tell others of her newly found joy. Eve listened to the story without comment. At its close, Fannie put both arms around her and kissed her, saying :

"I want to be a better sister to you, Eve, dear,—less selfish and more obliging, more thoughtful and kind."

Then the elder sister clasped her close, and kissing her in return several times, burst into tears. Fannie was much distressed, for Eve seldom expressed emotion.

"What have I done?" she inquired. "I didn't mean to make you feel bad. Eve, dear, what is it?"

"A sense of my own selfishness and neglect comes over me once in a while, and makes me feel badly. When you put your arms around me, just now, it reminded me so much of mamma's way, that I couldn't help crying, because—because this is the first time that any one has done it since she died."

"Oh, Eve! if I had only known," and Fannie's tears mingled with Eve's.

"We both know better now, dear, and after this we'll try to do better," Eve whispered, as Fannie bade her good-night.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *LESLIE DISPLAYS HER BANNER.*

LESLIE WHITING was coming home at last, for good, after a whole year's absence. Wasn't Tom glad? You would have thought so, if you had seen him cut up in the barn, after a telegram had come that morning, stating that Leslie would arrive in the one o'clock train. Tom wondered whether it would be the same bright, fun-loving, mischievous Leslie that had left them a year before, with a smile upon her lips, and tears in her eyes, or a quiet, sedate maiden, who spoke and walked just so, and thought it a sin to laugh and romp. He grew impatient with the last picture, and tried to banish it from his mind. He could not have Leslie so. He wanted her just as she was when she had left them. Then, he told her all that interested him. Could he do so now? He did not know, for a great change had come over Leslie during the last three months. She, with

many of her companions, had heard a voice say: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee;" and just as she was, without any preparation, without wasting time in trying to make herself better, she had answered, "Lord, here am I."

She had written to Tom a long letter, telling him of her great joy, and urging him to try the same way, and see for himself if he did not think there was a great gain in trusting in Christ. Tom had put off answering that letter, because he did not like to disappoint Leslie, and he could not make up his mind to follow her example just then. So the days lengthened into weeks, and now Leslie was coming home, and that letter would never be answered. He was glad enough to be excused from that task; especially glad, that his sister was really on her way. But—well, he hoped that her religion would not spoil her. If she was like Miss Danforth, she would do. To be sure, Miss Danforth had only taught him one Sunday, but he liked her just as well as if he had known her a lifetime, so he thought, as he rode along the road to the station.

"Five minutes of one. Not a moment to

lose. Trot along a little faster, Nebbie. It will not do to be late to-day."

Tom reaches the station, stops, and jumps out just as the train enters. A minute later, a little figure in grey emerges from the crowd, and catching sight of Tom, screams with delight, forgetful of the lookers-on. She rushes up to Tom, and almost smothers him with kisses.

"Oh, Tom, I'm so glad to see you, you dear, darling fellow! How you have grown! Almost a head taller than I, and such great, broad shoulders. I'm really proud of you. How are they all? Papa, mamma, Sukey, and Polly, and Tim, and the rest?"

"All well, and eager to see you," Tom answered, looking his sister up and down.

Yes, it was the same Leslie. He could not see that she had changed a bit, unless it was that her smile was sweeter, and her eyes filled with a more tender light. The same dear sister come back to him at last.

The ride home was very pleasant, and Leslie kept up an animated conversation, occasionally making Tom laugh aloud at her ludicrous pictures. Not a word did she say about being a

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Christian, until they were driving up the avenue. Then, suddenly:

"How is it, Tom? Are you still in the old life, or have you begun the new?"

"Still in the old, I suppose; but I've thought about the other some. A great deal this week, for Miss Danforth's words make me, somehow."

"Do you mean Kathie Danforth, my old friend?"

"Yes. She's my teacher in Sunday-school. She's tiptop, I can tell you."

"Oh, how nice! You're in good hands, Tom. She'll bring you out all right. Still, the sooner you begin to trust in the Lord, the better."

After greeting the other members of the family, and partaking of dinner, Leslie, who was very tired, lay down to rest for an hour. At the end of that time, waking much refreshed, she went over all the grounds with Tom, hunted for eggs with him in the barn, and then took a sail on the pond.

During the sail, she asked him all about his class and teacher, a subject of which he never seemed to tire, and ended by promising to invite Kathie to tea some evening during next week.

As they arose from the tea-table that evening, the church bells began to ring for the weekly prayer-meeting.

"Why, there are the bells! I had not any idea it was so late. I really meant to be in good season."

"I should think you would be too tired to think of meetings, or anything else," said Mrs. Whiting.

"Well, I am tired, mother, but not enough so to make it an excuse for staying away from prayer-meeting. Besides, I've anticipated so much pleasure from this meeting, that it would be a pity to give it up now."

"If you had spoken earlier, Leslie, I should have had the horses ready," said her father. "I'll order them now. It will not take Tim long."

"Oh no, father, I would not. Tim is tired, and it's only a short walk to the church, and such a perfect evening. Then, too, I may depend upon this valiant brother of mine as an escort, if I read his face aright."

Tom colored slightly. He had just been wondering what great pleasure Leslie could expect

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from attending a prayer-meeting, and did not in the least expect an invitation there himself. Moreover, he hated prayer-meetings; could not see any use in them; and disliked to go. But this was the first favor Leslie had asked of him. It would look mean to refuse her. He could not, he would not do it. Smothering his disgust, he looked up pleasantly, saying:

"Certainly, Leslie. I shall be very glad to accompany you anywhere, where I can be of service."

"Thank you, Tom. I felt sure you would say yes, or I would not have asked you," returned his sister, with such a sweet smile and loving look, that Tom felt amply repaid for his sacrifice just then.

"It seems to me, Tom, you've grown exceedingly obliging," put in Mrs. Whiting, who had heard Tom's reply, laying great stress upon the "exceedingly." "I wish you would find it convenient to oblige your mother once in awhile."

Tom was both hurt and angry. "Why will mother always find fault?" he questioned, and bit his lips to keep back the hasty words. When the fire was smouldering, he asked:



"What do you wish done, mother? Perhaps I can oblige you."

Mrs. Whiting looked pleased for once, and replied, graciously:

"I'd like to have you send Mr. Curtis up, on your way to school to-morrow morning. I wish to see him about an important matter of business, and it is very inconvenient for me to go there."

"All right, mother, I'll go. Come, Leslie, are you ready?"

They walked along in silence for a few minutes. Then Tom said, abruptly:

"If I could have just one wish, what do you think it would be, Leslie?"

"I'm sure, Tom, I haven't the least idea."

Tom whistled softly, was thoughtful a moment, and finally said, in his quick way:

"Well, I want to be made over again——"

"Oh, Tom!" interrupted Leslie, joyfully.

"And my temper left out," added Tom.

"Oh, I thought you meant something else," added his sister, in a disappointed voice.

They entered the church then, so their conversation ended. They were a little late, and so was Kathie, who was just behind them.

"I'm glad to see you back, Leslie, dear," she said, cordially. "And Tom, I can't begin to tell you how glad I am to see you here; and yet, I expected it. I hope you will enjoy the meeting."

Tom wondered why she had expected him. He certainly had in no manner intimated that he would be there.

The lesson was about the Prodigal Son, and as Tom listened, his heart grew tender, and he longed, like the prodigal, to return to his Father. When Dr. Irving had placed the meeting in the hands of the people, Leslie rose, and repeated in a clear, distinct voice, yet not without emotion:

"'Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.' One year ago, dear friends, I left you, a thoughtless girl. To-night, I am again with you, to display his banner. In the busiest time of the year, when we were preparing for examinations and graduation, the call came to me and many of my companions—'The Master is come, and calleth for thee.' I came to Jesus just as I was; and a peace and joy that I cannot describe, came into my life, and kept coming, coming,

until it seems that I am just like a river, ready to overflow its banks. As I look around upon you all, I see many dear ones who seem as if they have not yet heard the call; but if you listen, you will hear it to-night, for Jesus is here, and calleth for thee."

As Tom listened to the sweet, ringing voice, it seemed to him he had never felt quite so proud of his sister as then. Big fellow as he was, his eyes filled with tears, and when, immediately after, the dear pastor rose to pray, thanking God for the gift of his Son, and asking that the brother of this young disciple might come even to-night; and a moment later, his teacher of just one Lord's Day dropped on her knees, pleading for him and the other unconverted members of her class, the hot drops chased each other over his cheeks like rain.

One great longing filled his heart, to possess the peace and joy of which his sister had spoken. Forgetting everything else except this thirst, he stretched out his hand as if to grasp it. Then, bowing his head upon the seat in front, he said, in a stifled whisper, but loud enough for Leslie to hear:

"Dear Lord, only give me thy salvation, and I'll give up myself and everything."

He kept his head down until a little gloved hand pressed his, and Leslie's voice whispered: "Tom, dear Tom." He raised his face, and one look at its radiance told her that his longing was satisfied.

At the close of the meeting, there were hearty handshakings, fond words, and loving greetings. Those of Kathie's class who were present, gathered around her with eager faces. Tom never did a thing by halves. Stepping up to Kathie, he said, bravely:

"Total abstinence forever! I'll sign your pledge, Miss Danforth. How foolish I have been to let such a little thing as cider keep me out of the kingdom for almost a week! Last Sunday I thought I could never give it up. To-night, I feel as if I never wished to see it again. So hard, and yet so easy. We're all here to-night but Dell. Poor Dell!"

"Tell them about our pledge, Miss Danforth," whispered Lucia.

"Yes, indeed;" and Kathie told the others how Archie and his cousins had drawn up a

pledge, and submitted it to her for approval. "I recommend it to all heartily, fully believing it is to be the beginning of a great work in this place. But I think Leslie would make a better President than I. She can talk so much better."

"President," cried Leslie, "no, indeed, not I; but I'll be Treasurer, if you wish it, and will promise to have something in the treasury always. Let me read the pledge, please."

Archie handed her the paper.

"Good as far as it goes, but there's not enough of it," exclaimed Leslie, after a careful perusal. "There's no chance there for fathers and mothers; and surely you don't intend to leave them out?"

"No, indeed, of course not," returned Archie, a trifle disappointed; "but I don't see how to change it."

"I do," said Tom. Just draw a line over 'young.' Now how does it read?"

"'The People's Temperance Union,'" said Fannie Arnot. "That's just as it should be, because, you know, we want in time to make this a temperance town."

"That means work, Fannie, doesn't it?" in-

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quired Leslie, resting her hand lightly upon the shining hair. "Here is Dr. Irving."

"I wonder if I'm too late to say good-evening?" he said, in his pleasant way, joining the happy group. "It seems like old times to have you with us again, little Leslie, although you've changed a great deal."

"It's a new Leslie you have with you tonight, Dr. Irving. I left the old one behind me."

"And you prefer the new one to the old, I suppose."

"Yes, indeed; for she has better intentions than the old."

"Ah, Tom, my boy, come here. So the struggle is all over, and the glory of the Lord has come in."

"I am very thankful, Dr. Irving. But why did I not see the real gospel before? I don't understand it at all," answered Tom.

"I understand it now, Tom, for I have experienced the same. It was fifty years ago last Monday evening, since I first came to see how ready and able to save me Christ was, and to rest myself only on him and his work; and to

find peace in believing. I was a little fellow, only ten years old. There was no revival, and very little general religious interest at the time. I was spending a few days with my uncle's family. Monday evening, my Cousin Charlie, a young man of seventeen, asked me to go to the Young People's Meeting with him, for company. He led that night, and his words were so simple and plain that a child of five years might easily have understood him. Although I had attended church regularly with my parents, as long back as I could remember, and had received prizes for my regularity at Sunday-school, I had never before heard the great and wonderful plan of salvation made so clear. It was simply, 'I gave; will you take?' In my eagerness, I forgot that I was in a church, and that at least a hundred people were looking at me; forgot everything except my desire to have this one thing for my own. I could have it, if I would say that I wanted it. In a moment, I was upon my feet. Leaning eagerly forward, I exclaimed: 'Is that all, Cousin Charlie? Haven't I got to do something?'

"Nothing, Harry. It was all done when

Jesus died. All you have to do is to take him into your life. Will you do that, Harry?' he inquired as eagerly as I had done. 'Will you do it now?'

"'Yes, Charlie, I'll do it now.'

"As I said before, it is fifty years since I took the 'Free Gift,' and never once, during all that time, have I regretted it. And you never will, Tom. Every day that you live, you will value it more and more."

"It seems so strange, Dr. Irving. I came here to-night, careless, indifferent; without the slightest expectation that I should call upon the name of the Lord and be saved; yet somehow I couldn't help it. The lesson of the prodigal applied to me in such a way, that I couldn't help seeing it. I felt obliged to come, as the prodigal did; and here I am, thanking the Lord for his goodness to me. I've taken Christ into my life forever, I hope and believe; and I hope he will help me to follow in his footsteps always and very closely. Do you think I can be baptized a week from next Sunday?"

"I think so, Tom. And Leslie, how is it with you? Have you already received the ordi-



nance of baptism, or am I to have the pleasure of baptizing you as well as your brother?"

"I believe I ought to be baptized, Dr. Irving. It was so short a time before my return that I thought it best to wait. I also cherished a faint hope that Tom might come with me, and my hope is realized. I'm so glad. Are there not others who will come too?"

"How is it, Kathie? Will more of your class receive the ordinance with Tom and Leslie?"

"Well, scholars, what do you say? How many of you wish to be baptized with these two?"

"I do, and I, and I, and I," cried the voices.

"I'm afraid father will object," whispered Fannie to Norman. "He will think we are too young."

"Perhaps not, Fannie. We'll settle this matter to-night."

"Kathie," said Dr. Irving, as they left the church together, "how good the Lord has been to you! How wonderfully he has blessed your labors! Scarcely a week, and all of your scholars but one, Christians, ready to do whatever the Master commands."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *PLANS FOR TEMPERANCE WORK.*

IT was just a quarter after nine, when Norman and Fannie entered the library where their father was absorbed in a book.

"Meeting out already?" he asked. "I don't see where this evening has gone to."

"Why, papa, it's quarter past nine, and we stayed ever so long after meeting. Uncle Harry was telling Tom Whiting that story about his conversion, and so we stayed. Only think, papa, Leslie was there, and that brought Tom, and Tom found Jesus to-night. Miss Danforth was there too, and once I saw tears in her eyes, she was so glad. All her class but Dell, have made up their minds to follow Christ. Uncle Harry hopes to baptize Leslie and Tom the Sunday after next, and any one else who wishes to be; and we all do. You won't say no, will you, papa, because we want to obey the Lord?"

"My little Fannie, how you misjudge your

father. Why, child, I can't tell you how glad I am that you are both willing to show your colors in this way. Baptism is a great cross to many; I'm glad it's a pleasure to you."

Sunday morning dawned bright and beautiful. All Kathie's scholars except Dell, were at church; and as she looked from one to another, each appeared interested.

"That was a grand sermon, Miss Danforth," Tom said, as she stopped a moment to speak with him. "I believe this is the first time that I've really appreciated Dr. Irving's preaching. I hope that every one else has got as much good from it as I have. I'm lifted up."

At Sunday-school, Dell's place was still vacant.

"Dell had a little brother born this morning," explained Tom, when Miss Danforth inquired about her. "Her mother is very ill. She wants Dell with her all the time, and raves if she leaves her a moment. I met Dr. Foster coming from there on my way to church, and when I asked him who was sick, he told me. He asked about our temperance movement, and

I supposed he was on the side of temperance, and so I gave him as glowing an account as possible. He waited until I was through, and then he laughed and laughed, until I was actually angry. He called us fanatics, too, and wanted to know if we meant to storm the town. I told him we meant to storm the church first; and he walked away without a single word."

"Dr. Foster believes in moderation," remarked Luther Greyson. "He is a dangerous man."

"I mean to ask him to sign my paper this very afternoon," Fannie said, carefully folding the white sheet that Kathie had just given her.

"Be sure and let us see it when you get it, Fannie," whispered Norman.

"Don't you think, Miss Danforth," said Tom, "that it would be a good plan to have quarterly and half-year pledges? Some men would sign those, who wouldn't think of signing the other, and it would do so much good."

"Yes, indeed, Tom," his teacher replied. "We must have some right away. For instance, there's Peter Mason. A kinder, better-natured fellow never lived, when he lets rum alone; but as soon as he has a glass or two of

that, it puts Satan into him, and he is bad enough for any mischief. A pledge of that kind, among such men, would do a great deal of good, because it would insure peace for their families, and perhaps comfort for the time being."

Clare Lester, who had said but little, suddenly exclaimed :

"If we only had plenty of money, we could do lots of good. Why isn't there a reading-room or a coffee-house in Glenwyn? Such things would be novelties. They would attract poor fellows, and once there, we'd keep them. But that is out of the question, for it would take a great deal to pay for the rent of a suitable room, and to buy coffee, and good reading matter."

The scholars were all thoughtful.

"It would be a good thing, Clare, but as you say, it would take money. Still, I don't think it quite impossible," Kathie said, earnestly.

"I'm glad to see you all so much interested, and I have not the least doubt but we shall arrive at some definite plan to further our scheme, before we dismiss. Who is it that is always

ready to lend a hand in every worthy movement, and to give largely towards its support? Can't you think of somebody?"

"How blind we are! Mr. Lythcombe, of course!" responded Archie.

"And Cousin Harry too," added Norman. "Of course, he has not so much money as Mr. Lythcombe, but he would give as much if he had it. Any way, he does as much good, and never shirks his duty. Mr. Lythcombe is perfectly splendid, but I think Cousin Harry is just a little nicer, and I'm not the only one who thinks so, either," said Norman, nudging Tom.

"Be quiet, Norm," whispered Tom, but he could not help smiling when he saw Kathie's crimson cheeks. Then turning to his teacher, he said: "Leslie told me to say that she would be glad to assist you and us in our temperance work. She intends to give a good part of her money to help along this work."

"And mamma will help too, Miss Danforth," added Amy. "She'll do anything but lecture, she said, though she could do that well enough, if she only had the courage."

"Mr. Lythcombe, Cousin Harry, and Uncle

Irving will do for gentlemen lecturers, but it seems to me the ladies ought to take part too," said Fannie, thoughtfully.

"They will," replied Tom, confidently. "The success of the temperance movement will depend upon the zeal of the women. You see this is a new thing in Glenwyn. People will all be on the lookout. They'll come in crowds at first. They always do to a new movement, but they'll grow tired after the novelty wears off, and the number will get smaller and smaller, unless we have something new to keep it agoing. Now, whoever heard of a woman delivering a lecture upon a Glenwyn platform? The hall won't begin to hold the crowd that will gather when that event comes to pass, and it surely will, if success is our motto."

"Well done, Tom. I declare you're quite an orator. I should not be surprised to see you upon the platform yourself, before long. Such eloquence as that ought not to be wasted," said mischievous Norman. "Seriously, I think Tom's reason is a sensible one, and it ought to be commended. Don't you think so, Miss Danforth?"

"I'll have to admit it, as I see no way of

escape," responded Kathie, warmly; "but I'm afraid the women will not agree with me."

"Then you must be the courageous one yourself, Miss Danforth, and we'll cheer you on," said quiet Lotta, excitedly.

"Oh, Lotta!"

"Yes, Miss Danforth, Lotta is right. You must take the stand first, and others will follow," said Amy.

"There's the bell," announced Clare. "Let us wait a few minutes, and ask Mr. Lythcombe's advice."

I wonder what's going on here, and if I can be of service?" Mr. Lythcombe asked, pleasantly, taking a vacant seat beside Tom. "What sort of a performance was going on over here a little while ago, Norman?"

"We had a kind of menagerie, and I was the chief performer," replied Norman, laughing. "But, seriously, we have a difficult problem to solve, and we want your assistance."

"All right. Please to state the problem, Norman."

"We've been trying to decide if women, as well as men, ought to lecture, in order to make



our temperance movement a success. What do you think about it?"

"They will not need to be urged, Norman. This is the Lord's work, and he will carry it through. If women are to be the instruments to bring success, he will raise them up, and make them courageous."

"I suppose he will provide a place too. That seems to be the troublesome point just now. A hall, you know, costs money; and our treasury is not very full. Then we ought to have a reading room. Besides the rest, it would cost a good deal to fit it up pleasantly, and provide good books and papers. We would work hard to keep it full, if we only had it."

"Anything more?" asked Mr. Lythcombe, cheerfully.

"We thought it would be a great help to our work, if we had a coffee-house, where poor fellows could get a warm cup of coffee upon a cold day, instead of a glass of rum or whisky."

How Mr. Lythcombe's eyes sparkled!

"Blessings upon the boy or girl who thought of that," he said. "A lecture hall, a reading room, and a coffee-house! But suppose you had

them all, they would not bring you success without self-denial, love, charity, and hard work on your part. Have you counted the cost?"

"I think so," answered Tom. "But haven't you omitted the most important one? Don't all the others hinge on prayer?"

"Yes, certainly," responded Mr. Lythcombe. "How strange that I forgot that! Well, you shall have them all, free gratis, if you'll go out into the highways and hedges, and bring them in. As I passed by Lovell's Hall to-day, I noticed that it is to let. It's just the place we need. The locality is central, the rooms in good repair, and, best of all, it's just next door to Callahan's new saloon. With prayer for our watchword, we may safely go on."

"You've done so well this time, Mr. Lythcombe, that I think we'll have to bring all difficult questions to you in future," said Tom.

"All right, my boy, if they are of this kind. But it is getting late now. I shall be at leisure to-morrow afternoon, so I'll invite you to meet me here at three o'clock."

"The wheat was all ready for harvest, and we didn't know it, Kathie," said Harry Irving, as

they walked home together, a few minutes later. "The Lord is fitting you for the work that we are both to enter upon soon. I'm going in to-day to ask for grandmamma's blessing. Have you fixed the day of our wedding yet?"

"I had thought of the last Wednesday in October, if that would be agreeable to you."

"I'm going to preach in Denning Sunday after next, and would like to have you accompany me, if you can. You could then see the parsonage that is all ready for us."

"I'd like to go, Harry. Indeed, I feel as if I must go. I want to know our people a little before I'm really one of them. But my class; what can I do with that?"

"Trust them to Leslie for once. Of course she cannot fill your place; but she is so bright and original, that they will not feel their loss for one Sunday. If she refuses, Mr. Lythcombe must get some one else. Here we are."

The young man held the gate open for Kathie; and they went into the parlor, where grandmamma was sitting in her easy-chair, with a light stand drawn up before her. Upon it, rested the old family Bible that had belonged to her father.

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There were other Bibles in the house, but none were quite so dear to her as this. One hand shaded her eyes, and the fingers of the other rested upon a favorite passage: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

"Grandmamma, grandmamma, didn't you hear me, or are you asleep," cried Kathie, taking a step forward when grandmamma spoke no words of welcome, nor looked up.

Harry was too quick for her. Something in the motionless position of the figure in the chair caused him to go close up to her, and look into her face. The angel of death had set his seal upon it.

"Oh, Harry, what is it?" Kathie was by his side in an instant.

"Kathie," he whispered, supporting her with his arm, "grandmamma has entered into one of the 'many mansions.'"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *NORMAN GAINS A VICTORY.*

WEDNESDAY was always a busy day at the Arnots, and to-day it was unusually so; for Eve had invited some friends to tea, and wanted to make some special preparation.

The day was one of August's hottest, and the fire in the big range roared and crackled as if trying to rival the day in heat. Nancy, with a very red face, was trying to save time by doing two things at once:—watching the cake, and cleaning the china closet. Aunt Jo, cross and tired, was busy in the dining-room, from which she came forth every little while, to see how matters were going forward in the kitchen. Fannie, who had just come in, offered to carry the dishes from the table back to the pantry.

"Indeed, Miss Fannie, I'm much obliged to you. I'm just ready to drop, I'm so tired. It's myself as'll not forget all your little kindnesses. Be careful now, child, and take a few at a time."

"Nancy," called Miss Joanna, sharply, "why do you allow that careless child to carry that delicate china? Like as not, she'll break half of it."

Fannie had been trying very hard of late, especially since her baptism, to govern her unruly tongue. Frequently, she clapped her hand over her mouth, or bit the little tongue, to keep it still. This time she did even better, for she answered pleasantly:

"I mean to be very careful, auntie. Nancy looks so hot and tired, I thought I could help her a little."

"Umph!" came grimly from the dining-room. If Aunt Jo perceived any change in Fannie, she certainly did not give her the pleasure of letting her know the fact.

All went on smoothly for a little while, when Norman suddenly appeared, in one of his merry moods.

"My! how nice it smells in here. Got something good for a fellow? How cool you look, Nancy," catching her around the waist, and humming:

"Come and trip it as you go,  
On the light, fantastic toe."

Nancy, who had just deposited a pan of cake upon the table, ran after him, laughing, and flourishing the towel she held. Fannie, with a tray full of dishes, passing between them just then, received the towel upon the tray. Its weight knocked a cup over, and in her eagerness to save it from falling, Fannie tipped the tray toward her. The result was worse, instead of better, for two cups went crashing to the floor. Fannie hastily put the tray upon the table, and looked in consternation at the broken fragments.

"Oh, Nancy!" she exclaimed. "I——"

A stinging blow upon the ear, followed in quick succession by another and another, cut her sentence short, and made her faint and dizzy. Miss Joanna had quickly appeared upon the scene, and administered speedy punishment.

"What a shame, Miss Joanna! It wasn't her fault at all," cried Nancy, indignantly.

"Your comments are uncalled for, Nancy," was the cold answer.

In a moment Norman was back. White with passion, he rushed up to his aunt.

"Did you dare do it?" he cried. "Did you dare strike Fannie? If you were a man, I'd

knock you down. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to strike a little, feeble girl like that."

Seizing him by the collar, Miss Joanna shook him vigorously. Then letting him go, she said:

"Now, sir, don't interfere again when I reprove Fannie, or I'll thrash you soundly, big as you are."

"We'll see about that," returned the boy, quivering with suppressed anger. "Come, Fannie."

"Take Fannie to my room, Norman. She is in danger here. I will follow shortly."

It was Eve who spoke. Coming into the dining-room for something she needed, she had arrived just in time to see Aunt Jo release Norman, and give her warning. She stood there, pale, calm, collected, regarding her aunt for a moment, then without a word, left the room.

When Eve returned to her room, Norman was standing by the window, with his arms around Fannie, who was sobbing as if her little heart would break.

"Look, Eve," Norman said, pushing aside Fannie's hair. "Just look at the marks of her cruel fingers."



"Don't, Norman, don't look so. You frighten me," said the elder sister, gently, laying her hand upon the burning cheek. "Poor little Fannie! I'm so sorry that this has happened. It never will again. Father will put a stop to it. My mind is fully made up."

"Oh, Eve! I—I——" Norman tried to go on, but could not, for sobs choked him, and for the first time in years, he indulged in a good cry.

Eve was much distressed, and tears of sympathy gathered in her own eyes. Putting an arm around each, as if to shield them from harm, she said, soothingly:

"There, don't take on so, and you shall stay here till father comes home. Fannie, you'll be ill if you cry so. Come and let me bathe your face. Norman, you try and tell me just what happened, and how much you were to blame."

While Eve applied cold water to Fannie's face and head, Norman gave her an exact account of what had transpired. Repeating it kindled his anger anew.

"Eve," he cried, passionately, "I won't stand it any longer. I'll run away from home if she ever touches me again."

Eve herself was boiling over with indignation; but, instead of giving way to it, she said:

"Norman, I wonder what Cousin Harry and Miss Danforth would think if they saw you now?"

Norman's face was scarlet one minute and white the next. Covering it with his hands, he groaned in despair.

"Worse than that, Eve. What must Jesus, who sees, think? I've almost a mind to give up trying. I shall never succeed."

Norman's passion was all gone, and he was very humble.

"How little it takes to discourage you, Norman! I thought you were brave."

"I don't understand you, Eve."

"Come, sit down here by me, and I'll try to make my meaning clear to you."

Eve sat upon the lounge with Fannie on one side. She pointed Norman to the other.

"Suppose, Norman, a farmer had two apple trees in his orchard, which bore equally good fruit, only one bore early apples, and the other late ones. Now, suppose the farmer, after gathering the delicious early apples, should go to the

other tree, whose fruit was only small green balls, and say: 'What's the use of this tree? I'll cut it down,' you would think him very foolish to destroy a tree whose fruit would be just as good as the other, when it had grown. Would it not be just as foolish for a young Christian, full of faults, to give up trying, because he could not be as good and useful as his pastor, who had been growing for years?"

Norman's face brightened.

"Oh, I understand. I'll begin all over again. But, Eve, I think Fannie and I have a hedged in sort of life to push through, harder than any of the others."

"I don't agree with you, Norman. There are Dell and Tom. I think they have not much to encourage them; and poor Luther! What hardships have you in comparison with his?"

"You're right, Eve; Luther is to be pitied. Such a place to live in, and such a wretch as his uncle is! As for Dell, she is not trying; but if she were, she would not have much to help her to do better."

Eve was called away just then, and the children were left to themselves.

"Norman," said Fannie, "don't you think God has been trimming Eve's lamp?"

"I should not wonder if he had. The light certainly burned brightly just now. I'm afraid, Fan, that we've been unjust to Eve. We have not understood her. I mean to be a better brother to her after this."

"And I too," said Fannie.

"What? a brother?" said Norman, laughing.

"You always see the funny side of everything, Norman. Of course I meant a sister," replied Fannie, laughing in turn.

Silence reigned for some minutes. Norman was very thoughtful.

"Fan," he said, abruptly, "I've been thinking about Aunt Jo. You remember we wanted her to see our light through our own patience and goodness. But when she struck you so, I forgot everything. I had only wicked thoughts, and said some horrid things to her too. I don't believe that she'll ever see any good in me after this. Oh dear! I'm so sorry."

Fannie was quiet again for some minutes. At length an idea seemed to strike her.

"Norman," she said, solemnly, "I think I

know what it is you ought to do. The very hardest thing you ever did in your life. You ought to ask Aunt Jo's pardon."

"I never will," he said, vehemently; "never! How could you think of such a horrid thing?"

Norman was so excited that he rose, and commenced walking back and forth across the floor. At last he stopped before his sister.

"Fan," he said, in a gentle tone, "I never could do that. Isn't there something easier?"


"Don't you remember that talk we had with Uncle Harry, the day after our baptism, about shirking duty?"

"I had not thought of it; but I remember now. Yes, that's the only thing to do, if I want to do just right; but I'm afraid Aunt Jo would only laugh at me, and call me a hypocrite."

"Do what you know to be right, and trust God to take care of the results," said Fannie, quoting one of Dr. Irving's sayings.

Down went Norman's head in his hands. All at once he looked up brightly.

"I'll do it, Fan. It's awful hard; but I'll do it."



"Do what?" inquired Eve, entering the room in time to hear Norman's exclamation.

"The hardest thing I ever did in my life, Eve,—ask Aunt Jo's pardon. I was so angry to-day, that I said just what came into my mind, never once thinking of the harm I was doing. I'll do my duty, anyway, and if she don't believe I mean it, I can't help it. And, Eve, couldn't you manage, somehow, not to tell father? It would only make Aunt Jo dislike us more than ever; besides, it might make hard feelings between papa and her."

"I think papa ought to know," Eve said. "Aunt Jo is too ready with her hands, and papa would put a stop to it."

"I know, Eve; but would that be the best way?"

"Perhaps not. I think I will talk to Aunt Jo myself, and say nothing to papa this time."

"Eve," said Fannie, gently, "you're so nice to-day. I wish you were always so."

Tears dimmed Eve's bright eyes, and her voice trembled as she responded:

"I mean to try, Fannie. I was over at the parsonage, yesterday, and had a long talk with

Harry, and another with Miss Danforth. I think she's lovely. I want to forget all the past, and begin again with you."

"Dear Eve, I'm so glad," and Fannie clasped her arms around her sister.

An hour later, Norman came into the kitchen.

"Have a peach, auntie? They're delicious. Leslie brought them over to Eve a little while ago. Please take one."

"Well, I don't care if I do."

"Shall I bring up some more wood?"

"Yes, if you wish. The box is most empty."

After Norman had placed the wood in the box, he still lingered. At last he drew a step nearer, and said:

"Auntie, I spoke impudently to you this afternoon, and I want you to forgive me, for I am very sorry. I wish I could take all the words back, but I can't. Will you forgive me? I'm trying to do better, Aunt Jo."

"I'll believe you mean to improve when I see you improved," his aunt answered. "If you want to do a little charitable work, you may; *I'm so tired and hot.*"

"What is it, Aunt Jo?"

"You may take a little coal and wood to poor Mrs. Barnes, who is laid up with rheumatism. Poor thing! I'm sure I don't see what will become of all her little children if she's sick long. They're the poorest family I know of in Glenwyn. You've been there once, I believe?"

"Twice. Once for Uncle Harry, and once for father."

"Then you'll have no trouble in finding her, and she'll be glad enough to see you."

If there was one place to which Norman hated to go, it was to Mrs. Barnes. She was a widow who supported herself and seven children by taking in washing, going out scrubbing and cleaning, or doing anything that would bring a little money. She was a great talker, and that was the principal reason why Norman disliked to go there. But he was eager to convince Aunt Joanna of his persistence, and said:

"I'll be very glad to oblige you, and I'll start at once. Have you any message?"

"Yes. Tell Mrs. Barnes that I'll be round to see her to-morrow."

Nancy came in just then, so Norman went on *his errand*.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### *THE SEVEN MARYS.*

**S**ANFORD STREET, on the outskirts of Glenwyn, is a narrow court, with a row of poor looking cottages, that were once white, upon one side, and a long, bare expanse, with a little box of a house upon the other. The house is upon the corner, a few feet back from the street, with a small garden in front. Unlike its sisters opposite, this little shell is as white and clean as whitewash well applied can make it. A single elm of gigantic proportions stretches its branches over it, protecting it from the scorching sun, and making it a place of beauty to its dwellers. It was here that Norman stopped that sultry August day, for this is the home of Mrs. Barnes.

As the boy stood under the elm to rest a moment, he wondered how Mrs. Barnes could *find* time to keep everything in such nice order, *when* she was away from home so often; and

still wondering, he ascended the two steps and knocked. The door was opened by a little girl of about ten years of age, who asked what he wished.

"I'd like to see Mrs. Barnes. My aunt has sent her these things," answered Norman.

"Who is it, Mary Elizabeth?" called a voice inside.

"Dr. Arnot's boy, ma'am," replied the child, going into the room. "Shall I ask him in?"

"Haven't you done so? Then make haste and do it. Where are your manners, child?"

"I forgot them, mother. Will you please come in?"

Norman stepped into the bare, but neat, little room, and found Mrs. Barnes lying upon a lounge in a corner, with her head tied up in flannel. She looked up and smiled when Norman inquired how she felt, and hoped she would soon be up again.

"Aunt Jo sent you these, and told me to say that she would be in to-morrow to see you. She had so much to do to-day, that she was too tired to come."

"I'm sure your aunt is very kind, and I'm

greatly obliged to her. I'm sure I don't know how we could have pulled through last winter, if it had not been for her help when we were cramped the most. She's an angel of mercy, that's just what she is. I'll never forget the cold, stormy day last winter when she waded through a foot and a half of snow, with the thermometer at zero, to help me nurse my little Mary Kate, who was down bad with the croup. Mary Kate owes her life to your Aunt Joanna, Master Norman. Then there was Mary Ellen. She had the mumps bad, and this same good angel, blessings on her, came to see her every day, and never came empty handed, either."

"But, Mrs. Barnes," cried Norman in dismay, "haven't you made a mistake? You don't mean to say that you have three Marys in your family, do you?"

"Seven, child, seven," said Mrs. Barnes, laughing. "They're all Marys, and a blessed name it is too. Isn't it the name of the Virgin, and isn't it the name of my dear old mother, who's been in her grave this many a year?" Here a spasm of pain seized her, so she did nothing but moan for several minutes. But as soon as

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relief came, she took up her subject where she had left it. "Well, as I was saying, it wasn't for either of them that my Marys were named. I'll tell you all about it. When I was sixteen, we left England for America. There was fever on board, and my parents both took it, and died within an hour of each other, and were buried at sea. I was almost beside myself with grief at their loss, and didn't know what to do. When we were half way over, I took the fever, and knew nothing for weeks. When I came to, I was in a strange room with strange people about me. I asked where I was, and a sweet-faced lady came to my bedside, and putting her cool hand on my hot forehead, told me I was with friends. That was all she told me then, but as soon as I was strong enough, she gave me an account of all that had happened after I took the fever and became unconscious. Her name was Mrs. Mary Lovell, and she was upon the same steamer as myself.

"During the voyage she tended me night and day, just as if I was her own child. When we landed I was still unconscious; so she had me carried to her own beautiful home in New York,

where I received the care of the best physicians and nurses. I had been so very sick, that I was weak and nervous for weeks after the doctor pronounced my recovery sure. All this time, this lovely lady kept me for nothing; and as soon as I was able to go to work, she hired me as nursery governess for her one little lamb of a daughter, Mary. I stayed with Mrs. Lovell ten years; then I married Jeremiah Barnes. When I left my dear mistress, I made a promise that every girl the Lord sent me should have Mary for a first name; and I've kept my word. My children are all girls, and every one is a Mary something. Shall I run through them?"

"Oh yes, do!" said Norman, laughing.

"Well, the two oldest are twins. They were ten last May, and their names are Mary Elizabeth and Mary Eliza. Mary Elizabeth opened the door for you. She looks so much like her sister, that the only way I can tell which is which, is that her nose turns up, as if it was dissatisfied with its position, and wanted to get up higher, while Mary Eliza's turns down. *Mary Eliza*, rise, and let the young gentleman see who *you are*."



Mary Eliza immediately obeyed.

"That will do; now sit down."

Mary Eliza sat down.

"That little scraggy thing with red hair and freckles is Mary Ann. She's eight. You wouldn't think so, would you? She's stunted in her growth, your father says."

"What a pity!" commented Norman.

"The little fat one with black eyes is Mary Ellen. She's six. The one with long arms and legs is Mary Jane. She's about four and a half. That one with straight white hair is Mary Frances. She's three. There's only one more left—the little one—she's Mary Kate, and is just sixteen months old to-day. An interesting family, haven't I?"

"Very," said Norman. "But I should think you'd call them by their middle names; it is so long to say both names every time you want to call one of them."

"Oh no; not at all. My motto is: 'When you give a child two names, let her have them;' and, besides, Mary's such a blessed name."

Norman laughed, and looked at the little *Marys*, all huddled together upon crickets. To

him, they looked like seven little Josephs in their coats of many colors; for their clothes, though clean, were patched with the colors of the rainbow. They were very prim and quiet, sitting upon their little benches, with folded hands and erect heads.

"They're getting ready for lessons," explained Mrs. Barnes, noticing Norman's look of astonishment. "This is the way of it: Mary Eliza goes to school. She's the brightest of them all; and what she learns there she teaches Mary Elizabeth, and she teaches the others. Even Mary Kate has her slate and pencil; just to please her, of course, for she's too small to do anything but scratch.

"Mary Elizabeth could go to school, too, but I'm away so much that she can't be spared, for the others are too small to be left alone. Besides, she's my little maid of all work. She gets up in the morning at daybreak, makes the fire, gets breakfast, and washes and dresses the children. Then she makes the beds, clears the table, sweeps and dusts the rooms, irons all *the* plain clothes, goes to market, and teaches the *children*, and still has a little time to spend in

keeping the front garden trim. A smart little body is Mary Elizabeth, even if her mother does say it."

"I don't see how she can do so much," Norman remarked, seeing that the fond mother expected him to say something. "I should think she'd get tired before she was half through."

"Quite likely she does; but poor people's children have to work when they are tired, and say nothing about it."

"I have a nice peach in my pocket. Which shall I give it to? Mary Kate, I think, because she's the youngest."

The child reached forward to receive it.

"Why, you generous little thing!" said Norman.

The child was passing the peach from one to another, for each to taste the delicious morsel.

By the time they had all taken a share, there was little but the stone left. Norman thought it mean to leave the baby nothing, but he only asked:

"Are all the Marys as generous as this one?"

"Yes; they inherit that from their father."



A more generous man than Jeremiah never lived."

After saying a few more words in praise of the Marys, and promising to call again, Norman started for home. At the tea-table he kept them all amused with an account of his visit that afternoon to the queer little home, and a description of its queerer occupants.

"It would be a novelty to see them in good, whole clothes," remarked Eve, at the close of Norman's story. "I wonder how they would look?"

"That gives me an idea, Eve. I should think that you and some of your friends might get up a little sewing society, and help to make the poor little things some clothes. I never saw such shabby looking children.

"We might do the sewing, but what shall we sew? We haven't any good fairy to furnish the material."

"I did not think of that."

For a few minutes Norman was lost in thought. At last he said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do, Eve. If you can *get* up the society, I'll raise money enough

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among the boys for the material. What do you say?"

For some days Eve had been struggling with the old, easy, selfish life, and aiming at the new one that she had been forced to see through the changed lives of her brother and sister. A month before, she had thought Eve Arnot about as perfect as any one could be in this world. How different she appeared now! Impatient, fault-finding, uncharitable, selfish,—a long list of lacks. She was shocked beyond measure, when she thought of the years she had borne the name of Christian, and yet lacked all these virtues so essential to a healthy, growing Christian life. She had supposed she was doing all she could; but the moment she found out her mistake, she did not sit with folded hands wondering what to do; she went to work to do better; but trying in her own strength, she did not succeed as well as she expected. In great distress she sought her uncle, who soon made plain the reason of her failure. Kneeling at the side of the white-haired pastor, where so many had knelt before, Eve made a new consecration of herself. From that moment the new

life began to grow. It was a pleasure now to be self-sacrificing for Christ's sake; so, although there were many things she would have preferred to do, she put them aside for the present, and answered her brother heartily:

"I'll do all I can, Norman. I don't know how many will be willing to spend their time in this way, but I'm sure of Leslie, and we two can accomplish a great deal. Since the summer is so nearly over, I think we should get warm goods for sacks and dresses. Don't you, Aunt Jo?"

Eve had borne a hard cross that afternoon in Norman's absence. She had had a long talk with her aunt about herself and the children, and much to her surprise, she had found her reasonable, and ready to help. Henceforth, they, at least, would understand each other better. It was only a little thing to ask Aunt Jo's opinion about the clothes, but she thought it would please her, and she was not mistaken. For are not most of the joys of life made up of little kindnesses and thoughtful acts?

"I think it would be wise," she answered, pleasantly; "and, Eve, if you want my help, I'll do all the cutting and basting."

"Oh, thank you, aunt ; but can you spare the time?"

"I'll make it," she said, in her decided way ; so the matter was settled.

The guests had gone immediately after tea, and Dr. Arnot, having a sick child to visit, accompanied them. Norman and Fannie went out on the veranda, to watch the moon rise, and Eve sought the solitude of the parlor. It was twilight, and Nancy came to light the gas. Eve, who had seated herself at the piano, and was playing and singing softly some of her mother's favorites, interposed :

"Oh, please, not now, Nancy. It's so pleasant here."

"Very well, Miss Eve ;" and Nancy returned to the kitchen.

Eve had a remarkably clear, sweet voice, and put feeling into the words she sung ; perhaps more so to-night, because she felt them herself as she had never done before. In a little while, Norman and Fannie came in, and at their request Eve kept on. The hall clock, striking nine, told them it was time to end their pleasant hour.

"I wish that you'd often sing and play for us,

as you have to-night," said Fannie, as Eve pushed back the stool. "I didn't know your voice was half so sweet."

"I will, dear, if you wish it. I did not know you cared to have me."

"I didn't know it myself, Eve; but I do now."

"I lay down here, hoping to get a little sleep,—I was so very tired, and had such a headache—but I didn't succeed," said a voice from the sofa.

"You here, papa? I didn't know it. When did you come in? I am so very sorry," exclaimed Eve rapidly, apparently much disturbed.

As Fannie opened the door, the light from the gas lay upon the doctor's face. Eve noticed what she had not seen in months,—that her father looked old and feeble. There were many silver threads in his dark hair, and his face was thin and pale. Tears she could not keep back filled her eyes, as she thought of his lonely life. He grew suddenly dear to her. What if he should die? She was by his side in a moment, bending over him with tender solicitude.

"Dear papa, are you ill? You look so; you frighten me."

"Not ill, dear, only very tired, and a bad headache, as I told you; but your music has driven it away. I haven't heard those pieces since"—the doctor's voice trembled—"since your mother sung them. Let me, too, thank you for this pleasant evening. Will you often repeat it?"

"I've often wondered what was the use of having a good voice, but I see now. Dear papa, will you forgive all my thoughtlessness and selfishness, and love me a little for mamma's sake?" She was kneeling now, with her arms about him. He drew her head down and kissed her.

"For your own sake, my daughter."

He clasped her close for a little while, then rising, said :

"Norman, call Aunt Jo and Nancy, and we'll have family worship, as we used to, when mamma was with us. I thought I never could again; but I see I was wrong in feeling so. Thank God, the light has forced its way through at last. I'm beginning to comprehend it now."

## CHAPTER XX.

### *THE FIRST TEMPERANCE MEETING.*

**W**ILL Miss Danforth's class please to meet me in the pastor's room at the close of school?" said Mr. Lythcombe, as he struck the first bell. "I have some pleasant news to communicate."

"I bet a cent he's got the hall," whispered Norman, eagerly.

"I would not, Norman," said Miss Danforth, gently. "I would not bet."

Norman colored up, but replied, quickly:

"Thank you for reminding me. I'm always saying something that I ought not; but I do think it's about the hall, don't you?"

"I should not wonder," answered Kathie, smiling.

At the close of school, the class hurried to Dr. Irving's room.

"You must come too, Miss Danforth," said *Fannie*, putting her arm through Kathie's.

"Oh! I want to tell you something. I'm just as glad as I can be that you're going to be my cousin. I've wanted to tell you ever and ever so long. Dear Miss Danforth, you look so happy."

"I am very happy, Fannie, and very glad to have you for a cousin," returned Kathie, caressing the child. "Here's Mr. Lythcombe now."

The gentleman smiled as he saw the eager faces.

"You're very prompt to-day," he said, looking over some papers he held. Then he continued: "I want to inform you that I have engaged the hall for a year, with the privilege of buying it, if it suits our purposes."

"Is the hall furnished suitably?" asked Norman.

"Yes, just right. What do you say to holding a meeting next week?"

"Splendid!" cried several together.

"Mr. Lythcombe," said Amy, "I never saw any one quite so pushing as you are. You've just rented a hall, and propose having a meeting in a few days."

"Do you think there will be time enough



between to-day and Thursday to arrange something good, Kathie?" asked Mr. Lythcombe.

"I should think so, if they are all willing to work," returned the teacher.

"Well," continued the superintendent, appealing to the class, "is there any one who is not willing to work?" He waited for a moment, but as no one made reply, resumed:

"Very good. Many hands make light work; so hold them out, and I'll keep them busy. The notice will be given out at the concert this evening; but that is not enough. Circulars must be distributed, for we want our hall packed. Here they are. If you dispose of them to-morrow, you will have done a good work. You see I had them printed beforehand, in order to have them ready at a moment's notice."

"We'll take them round right after breakfast; at least, I will," said Archie Lincoln.

"Here are some little books containing temperance dialogues. One for each of you. We must have one of them for Thursday. The third one, I think. Tom, I'd like you to be Sam Balch, the tavern-keeper, and Amy to be Miss Hetty, his daughter. There's a good deal

in both parts. Do you think you can learn them?"

"I can," answered Amy.

"And I too," said Tom.

Mr. Lythcombe then gave parts to the others, and when he had finished, turned to Kathie:

"After the dialogue, you must deliver a short lecture; subject, 'Our Object.'"

Fannie clapped her hands.

"I'm so glad, Mr. Lythcombe. Of course it must succeed if Miss Danforth has anything to do with it. Don't you think so?"

"Certainly, little enthusiast," answered Mr. Lythcombe, smiling. "And you must help her by reciting a little poem, called 'Nell's One Happy Day.'"

"Oh, Mr. Lythcombe, I never——" began Fannie, then stopped short, and after a moment's silence, continued in a very different tone, "I'll do the best I can."

"Thank you. That will be enough for the first time."


"We'll make it so pleasant that those who come will be eager to come again. I have just *one thing* more to tell you, then I'll let you go:

"Last night, just after supper, I received an anonymous note, enclosing a check for five hundred dollars. I haven't the least idea who the giver is; but I am very thankful for the money. Truly, the Lord prospers our good work."

That evening, at the concert, Mr. Lythcombe kept the attention of the audience by relating the sad incidents of his early life. Many were moved to tears. Lawyer Whiting, who was present, seemed much disturbed. At the close of the exercises, a young man came to Mr. Lythcombe, and grasping his hand, said:

"Sir, it cost you a struggle to tell what you have to-night, but the Lord will reward you. Although I'm hardly twenty-one, I've been drinking off and on for two or three years; but, God helping me, I'll never touch another drop. I'll go back to my old mother, and cheer her last days by doing all I can to make up for the past. You may never see me here again, but, if I live, you shall hear from me."

"Tom," said Lawyer Whiting, shortly after their return home, "Mr. Lythcombe is a grand man. I wish there were a few more like him in *Glenwyn*."



Tom could not help thinking of a certain day, several weeks before, when his father had denounced Mr. Lythcombe as a fool and fanatic; and now there was no one like him in Glenwyn! This was a great and a hopeful change.

"I say, Tom," continued his father, breaking in upon his revery, "I'm going to attend that temperance meeting on Thursday, just for the fun of it. I want to see what it will be like. It will be curious to hear a woman speak, you know. Do you know that Callahan has heard of it somehow, and is getting up a free ball and supper for that night? He is a shrewd one. He knows now to bait his hook for fish."

Tom's face fell at this announcement.

"The wretch!" he cried. "Do you think he will succeed, father?"

"Quite likely many will go there who would have attended the lecture, if his place had not been open. The attractions of that saloon are too strong for the feeble-minded. Still, as that temperance business is a new thing, I think you'll have a good audience, larger than if it was the second or third time. People are curious, you know."

Tom regarded his father wonderingly for some minutes, then asked quickly :

"Father, do you intend to vote 'yes' or 'no' on the license question, this fall?"

Mr. Whiting in his turn looked at his son, opened his mouth, shut it again, walked back and forth, all the while pondering the question; then halting before Tom, and bringing his hands together, thundered, "No."

"Thank God for that," he said, reverently but joyfully.

"Tom, Tom, here a moment, please," called Leslie. So Tom hurried out to obey the summons.

Monday, out of school hours, the boys and girls of Kathie's class were busy distributing circulars. It was a weary but very happy company that met at Dr. Irving's for a rehearsal that evening, for they had the satisfaction of knowing that every house in Glenwyn had been visited that day.

Thursday evening, at seven o'clock, the doors of Lovell's Hall were thrown open, and a great throng kept coming, coming, until the seats were

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filled, and the aisles and doorways crowded. Such a mass of humanity had never before turned out to anything in Glenwyn.

The dialogue went off capitally. Dell and Tom, especially, were loudly applauded. Then followed perfect silence, as a sweet, girlish figure in white came upon the stage, and in a clear, ringing voice announced her subject.

"Friends," she began, "we have invited you here to-night to tell you our intentions, and to ask you to assist us. How? you ask."

Kathie had carefully considered her subject, and her earnestness and enthusiasm held her listeners spellbound. An appeal that she made to parents for their children was very touching. Tears glistened in the eyes of more than one mother, and hearts went out to her in sympathy. When she withdrew, the storm of applause fairly shook the house.

Kathie's address was followed by Fannie's recitation of a touching little poem, entitled: "Nell's One Happy Day." The heroine, a beautiful, interesting child, had drunken parents, who beat and abused her shamefully, almost *starved her*, kept her in rags, and sent her to beg

from door to door. One morning, the child fainted, from lack of food, upon the steps of a house where she had often been before.

The lady of the house, a kind, motherly woman, who had a little girl of her own about Nell's age, carried the poor little waif into her sitting-room, and laid the bundle of rags on her dainty lounge.

While she was removing the soiled and tattered garments, and chafing the hands, the child regained consciousness; and as she saw the kind, pitying face bending over her, and beheld the beauty all around her, the terrified look passed away, and a smile crept over the wan little face, as she asked, joyfully:

"Am I in heaven at last, and are you an angel?" When she found out her mistake, the old frightened look came back again, and she said, with a shudder: "Oh, I'm so sorry. I thought I was in heaven; but now I must go home and bring the pieces, or they'll beat me worse than they did last night."

The tender heart of the lady was touched.

"You shall never go back to your cruel parents, dear child," she said. "You shall stay

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here with me and little Stella for a few days, until I decide what can be done."

Then she clothed the little stranger in some of her daughter's pretty garments, and brought her delicacies to eat, and left her to listen to the singing of the birds, and to enjoy the fragrance of her flowers, while she summoned a physician.

Nell lay very still, with a light in her eyes and a look in her face that had never been there before; and when the doctor came late in the afternoon, he said the child was dying. The lady knelt beside her, and taking the wasted, transparent hands in hers, said gently, with a sob in her voice:

"Little Nell, you are going to heaven to see Jesus very soon."

"I'm glad; oh, so glad!" she answered feebly. "I'm perfectly happy now. Do you know, I never was so happy before. This is the one happy day of all my life—my one happy day."

Nell never spoke again. In a little while her face changed. The look was rapturous ecstasy for a moment, then peace, sweet peace forever.

*Fannie was an excellent speaker for so young*



a child, and recited so feelingly that her characters seemed almost real.

Old Billy Anderson, a drunkard who was present, started up several times, uttering exclamations; and when Fannie described Nell's death, the poor fellow put his head in his hands and groaned aloud. Harry Irving had been watching him intently for a long time. As soon as the meeting closed, he forced his way through the crowd, and sitting down beside him, laid his hand upon his arm, saying kindly :

"My poor fellow, you seem to be in trouble. Can I help you?"

Billy looked up as if dazed, saying, with a shudder :

"I had almost forgotten it, it is so long ago ; but to-night it's just as fresh as if it had happened yesterday. But who told her about my poor little Nell?"

"Nobody told her, Billy. It was a story in poetry that Fannie recited ; but it did seem almost real."

"There's no fancy about it ; it's all true, every word, except the begging. I never sent Nell to beg ; but I treated her shamefully, and almost

starved her, until one dreadful day, when I was beating her, she dropped down dead. They said it was heart disease, but I know better. I killed her, and I've never had a moment's peace since. I drink hard to drown trouble; but the moment I'm sober, it's all back again. I suffer the torments of hell, and I'm lost! lost!"

Harry shuddered. The poor wretch seemed so terribly in earnest.

"What brought you here to-night?" he asked, presently. "Why didn't you go to Callahan's?"

"There are enough there without me. Curse him, he's ruining others as he has ruined me, and they'll be lost too."

"Do you really want to be lost?"

"How can I help it, when I am?"

"But Jesus died upon the cross to save sinners. He does not want them to be lost. He bids them come to him and receive pardon. God loves you, Billy. 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' Those are his own words, and they are true."

"Say it again. It can't mean me. Say it *again*."

“‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love.’”

Billy was greatly excited.

“Where—where is it? Show it to me. Let me read it for myself.”

With trembling fingers, Harry took his little Bible from his pocket, and turned the leaves quickly until he found the passage. Placing the book in Billy's hands, he knelt beside him and offered a few words in prayer. Then resuming his seat, he inquired:

“You've read it for yourself now, Billy; do you believe it?”

Billy did not hear the question, for he kept repeating in a low tone to himself:

“Just think of it! Billy Anderson, an everlasting love! That means that he has loved you all these years, poor drunken wretch that you are! Loved you with an everlasting love. Yes, yes, it does mean me.”

“Then you'll let him take you as you are, will you not?”

“Yes; and, Irving, will you let me take this *book* home to-night? I want to look it over.”

“Yes, indeed, take it and welcome. It was

my mother's, and is precious to me on that account. You'll find passages underscored by the dozen. Study them carefully, and may God use them as the means of your salvation."

"Kathie," said Harry, when he joined her shortly after, "won't you feel well paid for all your time and trouble if Billy comes out on the Lord's side?"

"He will, Harry. I never saw him so much impressed. The Lord is with us in this work."

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *CALLAHAN'S SALOON.*

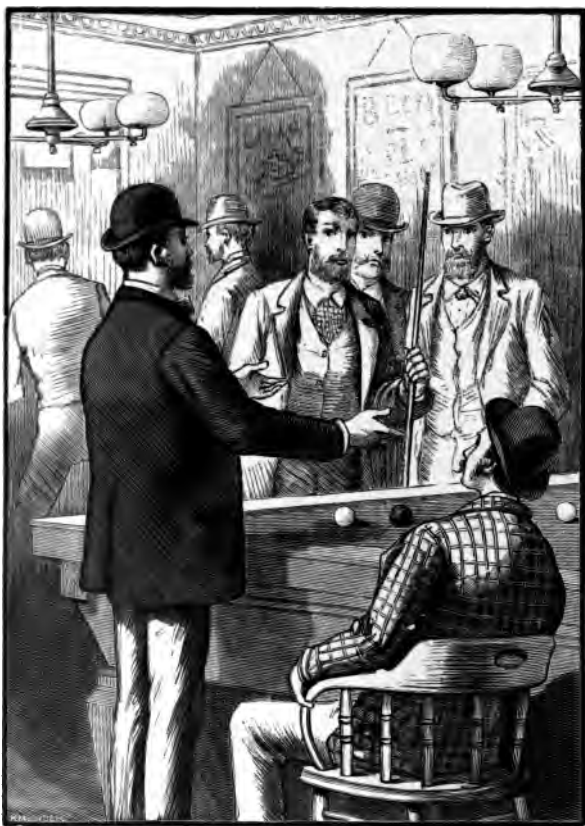
WHEN Billy Anderson left the temperance hall, he intended to go directly home; but as he passed by Callahan's, the dazzling light attracted his attention. A new idea came into his mind. He took a step backward, looked in, hesitated a moment, then entered.

The hall was very beautiful, with its rich frescoing, brilliant chandeliers, handsome pictures and lounges, great billiard tables, sparkling decanters, and cut glass. A gilded trap for the unsuspecting!

Callahan was behind the counter as usual, in nicely fitting suit of black, smooth hair, and bland smile. He looked up, smiling broadly, as Billy entered.

"Ah, good-evening, Anderson. Glad to see you. I thought we were going to lose you to-night. Have a cigar? Tiptop. What, not a cigar?" as Billy declined. "Well, then, a glass





Kathie's Views.

of something to warm you. It's sort of chilly to-night. What shall it be, brandy or gin?"

"Neither."

"Why, man alive! what's the matter with you? Not a cigar, not a glass of something warm? Well, have a game of billiards, then? I've hit it this time. Free to-night, Billy—everything's free to-night."

Billy looked at the long tables where a number of young men were gathered, some playing billiards, and others idly watching the game. Among the latter was Fred Arthur. He was just drunk enough to be foolish, and had played and lost until his purse was empty. Occasionally he said something silly, and then laughed boisterously at his own wit.

"Come, Anderson, lend me a dollar, and I'll try again. Beat this time sure. Stupid as a pig to-night. Ha, ha!"

Now was Billy's time. He marched up to the table, and looking straight at his old companions, cried:

"Boys, I played my last game of billiards, smoked my last cigar, drank my last glass of whisky, last night. To-night I have drunk



something stronger. I've tasted of the Living Water. Last night I stood before you a beast ; to-night I stand here a man."

For a moment amazement kept the loungers silent. Was this really Billy Anderson talking in this strain? Had he gone mad, or what had come over him? Then it dawned upon them like a flash. Billy had been to the temperance meeting. They set up an unearthly shout.

"Hear him, fellows! Listen to the parson! He's been over to the temperance meeting, and got religion," cried Fred, with a grimace.

"Let's take up a collection for Parson Billy Anderson," shouted another.

"Here, Bill, give me a bit of tobacco, will you? I'm just aching for a smoke. Haven't had one since morning," said a third.

"Haven't a bit," answered Billy, good-naturedly. "I threw it all away when I left the meeting. Boys, I wish that you'd been there too."

"Shut up, you fool," exclaimed Fred, angrily. "Don't come preaching round here. We won't stand it. Out with Parson Anderson!"

"Be quiet there!" cried Callahan from the

bar. "Don't you see that Billy wants to play billiards with you?"

"Indeed, Mr. Callahan, you are greatly mistaken. I have no such intention. I repeat what I told you a little while ago. I am a man, a new man; I'm done with the old life. I pray God it may be forever. I wish I could persuade some of you to join me in the new life; but if I can't, then good-bye."

Without another look at the place where he had spent so many evenings of his life, Billy started for home.

Just as the clock struck ten, he opened the door of his house, and stood upon the threshold a sober man, for the first time in years. The room, though scantily furnished, was clean and neat; and an attempt had been made to render it cheerful.

Two children—a boy of ten, a girl of twelve—sat near the table, studying; while their mother, who was trying to fashion a new jacket for Jimmie out of his father's old coat, held it up despairingly, saying:

"It's of no use to try, Jimmie. I've turned and twisted it every way I can think of, but I

can't do it. You'll have to stay at home cold days, that's all."

"Oh, mother!" cried Jennie, "what a pity that would be, when he is doing so well. He hasn't been absent a single day this term, or received a bad mark for a poor lesson. Poor Jimmie! Mother, dear, don't give up. Try once more."

"Just look at it," she said in dismay, holding it up. "How can I do anything with it?"

"Give it up," said the voice of Billy, who had quietly opened the door.

All looked towards the door, Mrs. Anderson letting the coat fall.

"You did not expect me so early, did you?" he added, coming in and confronting his wife.

"You're glad to see me, I suppose? Here, give me that coat. No son of mine shall ever wear a thing like that," deliberately tearing it in pieces.

"No need, Jimmie; you shall have a new one, just as good as any boy's, in a week or two. Bring me my jug, Jim."

The child cast a terrified look at his mother, but obeyed instantly.

"Now the hammer, boy."





Kathie's Views.

"It's broken, husband," answered the wife, trembling.

"Broken, is it? Never mind; we'll have a new one soon. I can get along without it to-night. Now open the door, Jim, and I'll let you see the last of the wretched little jug that has caused you all so much misery."

Jimmie opened the door, and Billy threw the jug upon the stones with a force that shattered it to atoms.

"Good-bye to rum forever! You see me sober for the first time since—since"—a quiver in his voice—"Nell died; but, thanks be to God, you'll never see me drunk again."

Mrs. Anderson looked reproachfully at her husband.

"You've said that so many times before, Billy, that it's an old story now. I'm quite accustomed to it."


"Yes, I know, and I don't blame you in the least; but it means something more than a promise this time. I've been to the temperance meeting at Lovell's Hall this evening; and, see here, don't that mean something?"

He took Harry Irving's Bible from his

pocket, and showing her the verse Harry had underlined, said:

"Mr. Irving lent me this book until to-morrow. Wife, I've made up my mind to look now to Jesus; and the Lord has accepted me. I know my life's a poor, weak, miserable thing to give him after he has done so much for me; but, such as it is, he has taken it to keep forever. I'm no longer my own. I'm bought with a price. You think it's strange to hear me quote the Bible, and well you may; for I haven't done such a thing in years. But, when I was a boy, I used to be familiar enough with it. I used to go to Sunday-school, and day-school too, in those days, for my mother was a pious woman, and did her duty by me and my brother. But I was weak, and went astray when I left my home. It was only a sip with the boys at first, but by-and-by it was a glass, then two, and so on, until I drank so hard that I lost my situation, and—you know the rest, wife. But, thank God, there's a chance for even Billy Anderson to reform, and he's taken it."

The poor, disheartened wife burst into tears. Could it indeed be true that her husband had



reformed? Dared she hope that he would never come shuffling up the path again? Were her long hours of midnight toil over at last, and would bread and clothes be provided for them without her constant and anxious toil? Can you blame her that, as she asked herself these questions, she shut out the faint hope that life might be brighter, and settled back into the old despair? Poor Billy! A word of cheer would have done him so much good just then; but his wife had done to offer. She must see before she believed again.

Little Jennie loved her father, drunkard though he had been. She saw his imploring look as he turned away from his wife, and her childish heart was touched. Besides, her father had said he was going to do better.

"Father, father," she cried, "don't look like that! I'll trust you. I'll believe in you." The child started up and took a step forward. The father turned and opened his arms. His child flew into them, and they closed around her for the first time during the twelve years of her life.

At the end of the week Billy brought home *eight dollars*, all that he had earned, and put it



into his wife's lap. She looked up in amazement, counted the money, then looked at her husband.

"You don't mean it all for me, do you?" she asked, tremulously. "I haven't seen a sixth of this sum, at one time, for years, and——"

"Its yours to do just what you like with. You know better than I what is needed. Next week it will be twelve dollars, for I mean to work every moment of the time, and never spend a cent on myself until I see you comfortable."

Mrs. Anderson actually smiled. Hope revived once more. She reached up and kissed her husband.

"Oh, Billy, what a blessed week this has been! I do, yes, I do believe in you!"

"Dear little wife! May God forgive me for all the suffering I've brought upon you."

The weeks passed by, and Billy still kept sober. The children were comfortably clothed, and the house no longer presented such a desolate appearance. Articles of furniture were purchased piece by piece, and before winter set in, the family was doing well.

"I don't see how you do it, Billy," an old companion said to him one day, when he passed by Callahan's without looking in. "I might try forever and never succeed."

"I would fail if I trusted in my own strength; but in the strength of the Lord I can go forward."

Just as Billy Anderson entered Callahan's saloon, on the evening of the temperance meeting, Tom and Leslie Whiting came out of Lovell's Hall.

"Callahan's affair didn't amount to much. Look, Leslie, there are only a few loungers left. Broke up early, I guess. Oh, look! there's Fred Arthur, and——"

Leslie uttered a sharp cry of pain.

"Oh, Tom! I went to ride with him yesterday, and—and he said he was coming to-morrow to see me. And, Tom, just look at him reeling from side to side, and laughing so loud! Thank God he has opened my eyes in time."

Leslie leaned heavily upon Tom. She felt sick and faint. So this was the end to her beautiful day-dream. Poor Leslie!

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *DELL'S ESCAPE.*

I AM very anxious about mother, Dr. Foster. Baby is four weeks old to-day, and she is not a bit stronger than when he was one week old. She has no appetite, and if she does not eat, how can she gain? Can not you do something for her?"

"She must take stimulants," answered the doctor; "but I think it would be better for me to go up and look at her. How's the little man?"

"About the same. He frets all the time. I never saw such a cross child. He worries mother half to death."

"Well, I'll take a look at both of them."

"Good-morning, Mrs. Faxon. I am sorry to find you here. I hoped to see you down stairs. What's the trouble?"

"Loss of appetite, I suppose, and baby is so cross. He worries me so," responded Mrs. Faxon, feebly.

"You must take wine and brandy, Mrs. Faxon. Not a stingy little drop, but a generous supply. You need them to build you up. I want to get you down stairs by the last of the week. Does the little fellow keep up a whine like this all the time? It's enough to make you both sick. I'll leave some drops to be given him three times a day."

The sultry days of August passed away, and September, with its gentle breezes, succeeded them. Both mother and child began to gain in strength, and at the end of a week, Mrs. Faxon was so much improved that Dr. Foster said she might take a short drive. After that, she gained rapidly, and by the middle of October she was quite well. With the poor baby, it was just the opposite. He pined away until there was hardly anything but bones left, and cried incessantly, except when under the influence of opiates.

Instead of decreasing the quantity of brandy that she took before breakfast, Mrs. Faxon gradually increased the dose; and even took some after dinner. Thus, ere long, the proud, beautiful woman had become a drunkard, and sacrificed everything to her insane passion.

One bright day late in October, when the baby's nurse was in town, Dell, who had been amusing him all the morning, having at last put him to sleep, went out to get the fresh air. She was so tired and warm, and the day was so beautiful, that she made a long stay.

In the meantime baby awoke. His mother tried in vain to pacify him. At last, becoming desperate, she gave him his drops. They soothed him for a little while, and then he was worse than ever. Too much intoxicated to know what she was doing, the mother gave him a second dose, three times as large as the first. Almost immediately baby fell asleep, and slept on. By the time Dell returned, Mrs. Faxon was sleeping off the effects of her stupor.

"What a long sleep baby is taking! It is something unusual for him. I hope it will do him good," thought Dell, as she went to look at her brother. She started back with a cry. The baby's hands were clenched, and his little face was covered with purple spots.

Catching him up, she tried to rouse him by shaking him gently, and holding him in a sitting position. Finding that she could not waken

him, she tried to rouse her mother, but without effect. Really frightened, she seized her hat, and ran all the way to Dr. Foster's, only to find him out of town. On her way back, she met Dr. Arnot, who offered to take her home. Gladly accepting his offer, she gave him a brief account of the state of affairs at home, and begged him to come in and see the baby.

He did so reluctantly, for he did not care to meddle with Dr. Foster's affairs. As he entered the room, the sight made him heart-sick. The unconscious mother upon the bed, the open vial on the stand, and the rigid infant in the cradle—what a tale they told! He no longer wondered, as he had done that morning, when he met Mr. Faxon, what had changed him so suddenly from the young, cheerful, active man, into the melancholy, care-worn person before him. His hair, too, he had noticed, was almost white. Indeed, Mr. Faxon appeared prematurely old.

A glance at the baby told Dr. Arnot that there was no hope. The child was dying; and yet he made an effort to save him, for the poor father's sake.

"Dell," he said, "be brave for your father's

sake. Can you go for him? I think he would like to see the baby alive. He thought so much of it. Go, if you can."

Dell obeyed; but before she returned with her father, the fretful, tired little baby was at rest.

Late in the evening Dr. Foster called. Dr. Arnot had left word for him on his return home. Dell went to tell her father.

"He here?" he cried angrily. "Isn't he already satisfied with the mischief he has done? I never want to see his face again. You may tell him so, and tell him to leave my house."

Dell tried to excuse her father, but Dr. Foster went away much displeased.

When Mrs. Faxon awoke early the next morning, and heard of her baby's death, and that she had given it laudanum enough to kill a dozen babies, her agony was terrible to witness. She shut herself in her room, refusing to see any one, or to take any nourishment for hours.

At the end of a week, Dr. Arnot pronounced Mrs. Faxon hopelessly insane, and recommended her to be taken to the asylum. Mr. Faxon went to make arrangements for her to enter the asylum, and was to be absent three days.

Although no one had spoken to Mrs. Faxon about the matter, she overheard the servants' talk. She was almost frantic, and became so violent that her attendant threatened to tie her. Becoming gentle almost immediately, she pleaded for Dell to stay with her, and promised to do what they thought best. Her quietness and submission put both Dell and the nurse off their guard, and once during the evening Mrs. Faxon was left alone for a few minutes.

That was just what she wanted, for she seized the opportunity to dart into the dining-room, and secure a bottle of wine from the sideboard. Hiding it in the folds of her dress, she hurried back; and when Dell returned, her mother was sitting just as she had left her. No one suspected the terrible plot that was forming in her crazy brain. Pleading fatigue, she went to bed early, but not to sleep, though to all appearance she was wrapped in deep slumber.

As Dell bade her good-night, a ray of hope came into the poor child's heart. Perhaps it was not so bad as they thought. Perhaps her mother would get well. The words she had *spoken* were so rational.



When at last the tired nurse fell asleep, the maniac seized the bottle, and slipping out of bed, stealthily crept along until she reached a stand where a wax candle was dimly burning. Seizing it, she passed noiselessly through the hall and down the stairs to the rooms below.

Outside the wind was blowing a gale. She carefully lowered the upper sashes in all the rooms. Then she applied her candle to the lace curtains, and to the articles on the table, and passed up the stairs. The wind caused the flames to spread rapidly; and in a short time the whole lower story was on fire.

Dell awoke suddenly with a stifling sensation. Springing out of bed, she rushed to the door. It was locked from the outside. She was a prisoner. Almost suffocated with smoke, she flew to a window, and throwing it up, shouted "Fire!" as loud as she could scream. Beneath her, the boards were already hot beneath her feet. Leaning out upon the sill, she screamed "Fire!" again and again. Would no one ever hear?

Presently, somebody rattles the handle of her door, and shouts:

"Dell! Dell! Get up quick, and open your

door. The house is on fire above and below. The flames have already burned through my floor, and the stairway is cut off. Let me in, quick!"

"I can't open it. It is locked outside," cried Dell, in terror. "Where is mother?"

"She must have escaped without thinking of us. She is not in her room. Dell, there is no key in your door."

For a moment, Dell seemed paralyzed. Then the truth flashed upon her. It was her mother's work. Above and below her, the flames were leaping wildly, and she was locked in alone to perish. What a terrible death awaited her; and after death——

"O God!" she cried, in anguish, "send somebody. Don't let me perish in the flames! Oh, save me!"

With a great effort, she raised herself to the sill, and clung to the shutter. Suddenly, a voice shouts:

"Dell! Dell! Hold on a minute, and we will save you!"


But Dell hears it not. She has fainted.

The alarm has been given, and the firemen

have already appeared; and Harry Irving is mounting a ladder. And none too soon, for Dell's hold has loosened, and she is slipping, slipping. A moment more, and she is in his arms. He descends with his heavy burden slowly; but she is safe. From another window, a fireman has rescued the nurse, who takes poor, unconscious Dell in her arms, and carries her to Lawyer Whiting's.

The fire had made such headway that all efforts to save the house were vain. Flames darted from all the windows, and leaped towards the roof, when a frantic laugh, ending in a prolonged shriek, was heard, and the figure of a woman was seen for an instant, then disappeared in the ruins; for the roof had fallen in.

Two days later, when the rubbish was sufficiently cleared away to allow an entrance, a few charred and blackened bones were found; all that remained of Mrs. Faxon.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *THE DEATH-BED MARRIAGE.*

THE short October day was fast drawing to a close when Harry Irving drove up to the station to meet Kathie. He was just in time, for as he entered the waiting-room, the train came steaming in.

When the greetings were over, and they were on their way home, Kathie inquired about Dell.

"She is very low," said Harry, sadly. "Her disease was nervous prostration at first, caused by the shock of her mother's fate; but on Sunday, brain fever set in, and Uncle Arnot gives us very little hope."

"Is she still at Mr. Whiting's?"

"No, she is at uncle's. They were glad to have it so. Poor girl! It is pitiful to hear her talk when she is delirious."

"In her conscious moments does she seem to realize her danger?" asked Kathie, brushing away the fast falling tears.

"I think not. Besides, she is conscious only a few moments at a time, not long enough to fix her mind upon anything. Even if she were conscious all the time, she is too weak to think."

"Poor Dell! May God be merciful to her, and spare her!"

They drove on in silence for some time. Then Harry said, gently:

"You haven't asked me about Denning, Kathie. I spent two days there last week."

"Tell me all about it," she cried, eagerly.

"There is not much to tell, only I had a delightful time, and was made much of, as usual. I spent the night at Deacon Wiswell's. You remember you met his wife once. She reminds me so much of grandmamma; not in her looks, but her manners. I know you will like her, Kathie; she is so pleasant. She made me promise to bring you over to tea once before we settle there for good.

"There happened to be a children's meeting that evening, and, of course, I was asked to make an address. There were at least two hundred *children* present, and I was glad of so favorable an opportunity to sow good seed. I introduced

the temperance subject before I ended, and the attention they gave me was wonderful. I had about fifty of our pledges with me, and could easily have disposed of three times that number.

"I wish you could have seen how excited the little things were. Little Bobby Hathaway told me he'd be my right-hand boy if I'd let him. 'Papa's your right-hand man, you know,' he said, at the close. And when I told him I would accept his offer, he sprang into my arms, saying: 'I'm going to start a temperance army right away, next week.'

"There's a work to do among the little folks, Kathie, and I long to do it. I realized more than ever, when at that meeting, the importance of this work among the young. I felt, too, my need of increased faith and love and patience. But, most of all, I felt how grand and glorious a calling it is to be a servant of God. To sow the seed and keep it well watered, and by-and-by to see the result. I'm glad now that I accepted the call to be the pastor of this church instead of the other, though it is less influential and comparatively poor. There is a

better opportunity for real work here, for the people are all eager to help. God bless them! I feel already as if they were my people."

Kathie's heart echoed the words.

"How good God is to us," she said, fervently. "I am so happy to-night, I feel that I could bear anything for Christ's sake."

One by one the stars came out, and the moon rose from behind the hills, shedding her silver light upon the bright crimson and orange of the trees, and adding a greater charm to the already beautiful landscape.

"How beautiful!" remarked Harry, as they drove slowly along, enjoying the scene. "The longer I live the more I wonder how any one can be so foolish as to reject God, when everything speaks so plainly of him."

Suddenly they came upon a turn in the road where it was so narrow that it was impossible for two carriages to pass each other. They were more than half way over, when they heard a great rushing and shouting in front of them.

"What is it?" cried Kathie, in alarm.

"Some half intoxicated students, I judge, from the noise," returned her companion, tight-

ening his hold upon the reins. "Don't be frightened. We shall be out of danger before they are in sight. There, Russie, Russie, good boy, go on," he said, coaxingly, to the horse which had stopped short. But Russie refused to move.

It was impossible to back, as the horse was paralyzed with terror. Seeing the threatening danger, Harry told Kathie to jump out; and he was about to follow her, when the revelers came dashing in sight, shouting with all their strength. The horse started upon a run, throwing the young man forward upon his face. His foot caught in the wheel, and he was dragged quite a distance after the flying horse.

Kathie's cries of terror brought the half-drunken party to a halt. There were three of them, and one, who was less intoxicated than the others, hurried to her, and asked what was the matter.

In the meantime Billy Anderson, on his way home from work, came in sight of the dangerous turn just as Harry's horse had cleared it.

Fearless Billy planted himself in front of him, and threw up his hands. It had the de-



sired effect, for the frightened beast stood still. Billy extricated the unfortunate man, and, as he raised him in his arms, saw to his horror his best friend, Harry Irving. He uttered a groan of anguish as Billy laid his head back gently.

"You're badly hurt, Mr. Irving. We must have a doctor at once."

By this time Kathie, followed by those who had caused the accident, sober enough now, reached the spot. Kneeling upon the turf, she clasped her arms about the prostrate figure, and whispered :

"Harry, dear Harry, speak to me. Tell me you are not badly hurt."

Upon the arrival of the others, Billy Anderson hurried away for a doctor. Before he arrived, Harry revived, and looking at the frightened group, said, with difficulty :

"Don't look so terrified. Perhaps it is not so bad as it seems."

Then he tried to rise; but the effort proved too much, and he fell back with a groan.

Just then Dr. Arnot arrived, and, with Billy's assistance, lifted the injured man upon the mattress he had brought in his light wagon.

"Now, Billy, look after my nephew's horse and buggy, please, and see that it is sent home safely. Kathie, my dear, let me help you up in front with me."

"Dr. Arnot, is he seriously injured, do you think?" Kathie asked, as he almost lifted her into the wagon.

"My poor child, I cannot say positively, until I make a thorough examination, but I fear it is bad enough," he answered, sadly.

At that moment, Fred Arthur came quickly forward, and touching the doctor's arm, asked, hoarsely:

"Will he die?"

Dr. Arnot cast a withering look upon him from his keen gray eyes, and without a word seized the reins. Almost beside himself with despair, the poor wretch seized his arm with a vice-like grip, and gasped:

"Oh, Dr. Arnot, for God's sake tell me? Will murder be added to my list of sins?"

"Go back to Callahan's and ask him, wretched being that you are," cried the physician angrily, shaking off his hold, and raising his whip threateningly.

Poor Fred slunk away, and Dr. Arnot drove slowly to the parsonage, where all was in readiness for Harry ; for Billy Anderson had been there before them, and had broken the sad news as gently as possible.

After Harry had been made as comfortable as possible in his own room, Dr. Arnot proceeded with the examination. His face grew graver and graver every moment, and when he had finished, the faint hope he had cherished was gone.

"My dear, dear boy," he said, stooping over the young man and looking lovingly into the white, suffering face. Then he pushed back the damp hair from the broad brow and kissed it, his eyes filling as he felt that the bright young life was ebbing away, and he was powerless to stay it.

Harry opened his eyes, and recognizing his uncle, smiled, saying slowly:

"Have you completed the examination?"

"Yes."

"And the result?"

"Dear boy, how can I tell you?"

"Tell me the worst, Uncle Arnot."

"You are bleeding internally, Harry. The end is death."

A spasm passed over the young man's face.

"Have I long to live?" he inquired.

"Only a few hours, Harry."

"So soon? I was in perfect health and strength two hours since, and now—can it be possible that death is so near? Uncle Arnot, go into the back part of the room for a little while, and leave me alone with my Saviour."

Harry Irving thought of his youth and talents, of the sweet young girl he had hoped to make his wife, of Denning, and his church and people, of the work he had intended to accomplish the coming winter, and of the good he wished to do. How much he had to live for? How could he give it up!

"O God," he cried, "why must I go so soon, and my work unfinished? Why must I die? Dear Lord, help me," he prayed, after a brief struggle. "Help me to say, 'Thy will be done.'" Then softly he repeated: "'Fear not; for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee;

and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. Since thou was precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give people for thy life. Fear not, for I am with thee. My grace is sufficient for thee. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.'

"Dear Lord, I do not know now, but in a little while it will all be plain. Then 'I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.'

"Uncle Arnot, will you call them now? The conflict is over. I am ready and willing to go. He will raise up another to complete my work."

One by one, relatives and friends came to say farewell to the one so dear to them. Fannie Arnot tried in vain to keep back the sobs that would burst forth.

"Don't take it to heart so, darling cousin," said Harry, soothingly. "It is only a little

while at most. Then we shall meet again, never to part. A few months ago, little Fannie, I thought you would be the first, but the Lord has chosen me. I shall soon see him face to face. Love Cousin Kathie very much for my sake, and by-and-by meet me over there."

"Kathie," Harry said, when the farewells had all been taken, and they were at last alone, "do you recall your words to-night after you spoke of God's goodness to us: 'I am so happy to-night, I feel that I could bear anything for Christ's sake?' My darling, he calls you to make a sacrifice. Cannot you trust me to him?"

"It is a terrible sacrifice, Harry; but I do trust him," she replied, choking back the sobs that shook her frame.

"Kathie," he said again, after a little quiet, "it would have been easier to die if I could have called you wife even for one little hour."

"Dear, dear Harry! why may it not be so, if you wish it? I do above all things. Do you feel strong enough now?"

"Yes, dearest, the pain is all gone; it is peace, sweet peace. I feel that this is the change that precedes the final great one."

Dr. Arnot occupied a lounge in the adjoining room. Kathie spoke a few hurried words to him, and then returned to Harry's bedside.

In a few minutes Dr. Arnot entered, followed by Dr. Irving.

"Father, I want to leave you a daughter to love and comfort you. You'll be a good father to my little Kathie."

The father's voice trembled as he pronounced the solemn words that made Kathie Danforth and Harry Irving husband and wife. And a pure, deep joy that neither had felt before filled each heart, making the parting less bitter.

"My Kathie, my wife, bless you for this last joy. Darling wife, farewell! Jesus has come."

And the three "looking steadfastly on him saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *PLANNING A SURPRISE.*

OUTSIDE, the wind was howling, and the first snow falling rapidly; inside, it was warm and cheerful. A bright fire burned in the open grate, and before it, wrapped in thought, sat Kathie. In one hand she held an open letter that she had been reading.

In the midst of her revery, the door opened and Dr. Irving entered.

"Kathie," he said, "Dell Faxon has asked to see you. Dr. Arnot is in the hall, and says he will drive you over if you wish to go. It's a wild night, but I don't believe it will hurt you to go. Dell is so anxious."

"I'll go at once, father. Poor Dell!"

Kathie left the room, and soon returned, equipped for her ride.

"Is she out of danger, uncle?" asked Kathie, as they neared the house.

"Yes, the danger is past, but she is still very



weak. I think a sight of you will do her good, if anything can just now. Here we are. I'll call for you in an hour. That will be long enough for the first visit. How the snow drives! There will be good sleighing in the morning, if it keeps on all night."

"Do you think it will?"

"It looks very much like it now," tucking the buffalo about him. "Good-bye."

Kathie shook the snow from her cloak, and ran up the stairs. Eve met her in the hall, greeted her warmly, took her wrap, and led the way to Dell's room. She lay among the pillows, a mere shadow of her former self. As Kathie entered, she smiled and put out her hand, saying in a voice scarcely louder than a whisper:

"I felt sure you'd come, dear teacher. I can't tell you how glad I am to see you. Sit down there, where I can have a good look at you. Dr. Arnot says I must not talk much, but there are several things I want to tell you. Last night I gave myself to Jesus, and to-night I am rejoicing in his love."

"My dear, I am very glad. Can you tell me *about it?*"

"Oh, yes, indeed. I'm glad to share the joy with some else. You know it is just a week to-day since I first sat up. I've done a great deal of thinking, and the thinking led me to see how wicked and sinful I have been all these years. But I thank God that there is a new life before me now; and with God's help I want to live a life for Christ."

Kathie pressed the hand she held, saying:

"Dell, how often I have looked forward to the time when all my class should become Christians; and now that it has come to pass, my joy is too deep for expression."

"Dear Mrs. Irving, I think I ought to tell you something that I never meant you to know. Of course you remember the first Sunday you took our class, and your first prayer in public. Well, the first longing I ever had to be a Christian dates from that time. I knew I ought to yield myself to Christ at once, but I would not. I kept on sinning, and now I have suffered; but with the suffering comes peace. Father attended the meeting last night, and he told me that Fred Arthur spoke, and asked the prayers of God's people. Fred promised Mr. Irving that he

would seek the Lord, and before he left the meeting he found him. There were several others who rose for prayers, and they, too, are happy in the Lord."

"‘Therefore will I give people for thy life,’" said Kathie, tears glistening in her eyes. "Dell, Mr. Irving repeated that passage, with some others, a short time before he died. He took it as a promise, and God is fulfilling it now. Harry's death has brought salvation to some, and will bring it to many more."

"Do you think there was no other way to save Fred and the rest?" asked Dell.

"It seems so as I look at it now," answered Kathie. "God knows what is best, and brings about results in his own way. What is a mystery to us now will be revealed when we reach heaven. We must wait patiently till then."

"Luther Greyson called to see father this morning. His uncle is worse, and they are in great distress. I've been thinking a great deal about them since father told me, and I have at *last hit* upon a plan that I think will benefit *them*. Will you help me to carry it out?"

"Gladly," returned Kathie, warmly. "What do you propose to do?"

"You know the pretty little white cottage on Lake Avenue?"

"Yes."

"Father bought it, and gave it to me to do as I please with. Don't you think it would make a nice home for the Greysons?"

"Delightful! But they cannot afford to hire it."

"Of course not. I mean to let them live in it, rent free, provided they take good care of it. I want to help in some way to brighten Luther's life; he is such a noble fellow."

"What next?"

"The house must be furnished neatly. I shall want your help there, for I can't do anything but plan. I thought perhaps our class would like to join us. What do you think?"

"I'm sure they would."

"Then I shall have to ask your help again. Will you please arrange to have them meet on Monday? I've talked with Dr. Arnot about it, and he is perfectly willing to have them come here."

"Then I will very willingly do the rest."

"I want to get it all ready by Christmas. Then I will ask them over, and tell them it is theirs."

Dr. Arnot entered just then ; so the conversation came to a sudden stop.

"My prophecy was fulfilled sooner than I expected," he remarked, pleasantly. "Miss Dell, you look fifty per cent. better. I think Mrs. Irving's visit has proved an effective medicine. Should you like to have her repeat it?"

"Indeed I should. You will come again soon, won't you, Mrs. Irving?" answered Dell, her face lighting up with pleasure at the prospect.

"Yes, dear ; I would have come before, if I had not been forbidden ; but I'll make up for lost time by coming oftener."

"I have some good news to tell when you're ready for it," said Dr. Arnot, breaking the silence that followed Kathie's remark.

"We're all attention," said Dell, laughing.

"Who do you suppose has taken a stand for temperance?"

"It can't be Callahan?"

"No; he will never take a stand for anything in this world. He was accidentally shot, and instantly killed, early this afternoon. He was under the influence of liquor at the time, and went out of life so."

Kathie sighed. "Poor wretch! What a terrible death!"

"Terrible," answered the doctor. "He rejected Christ, and plunged into ruin with his eyes open. But his death has proved a means of grace already. Mr. Whiting has signed our pledge. I drove by there about an hour since, and he called me in to witness a scene that was being acted in his barnyard. Upon an elevated platform, that he had constructed for the purpose, tier after tier of bottles were arranged, and Mr. Whiting sent the neck of each one spinning as he knocked them with his cane. Tom and Leslie were wild with delight, while Mrs. Whiting stood in the doorway wringing her hands and calling to her husband to stop. When she saw me, she told me that her husband had gone suddenly insane, and begged me to go for assistance. For consolation, I told her that I'd like to see every person in Glenwyn who possessed

liquor of any kind to go insane in the same way.

"Mr. Whiting never stopped until he had beheaded the last bottle, and the yard was like a red river for quite awhile. You see the good work is slowly but surely advancing. I told Mr. Whiting that I could say amen to the step he had just taken, and advised him to make a good thing still better by stepping over the line and proclaiming himself 'on the Lord's side.'"

"What is it, Dell? I see that something is perplexing you."

"We must prevent Callahan's saloon from falling into the hands of another rumseller."

"That has already been attended to. Mr. Whiting has rented it for a mission chapel for the foreigners in Glenwyn."

"News, good news, the very best of all," shouted Norman, bursting into the room.

"Don't spoil our jubilee, Norman," cried Dell.

"No, I'll crown it. Glenwyn—brave, daring little Glenwyn—has voted 'no' on the liquor license. Just think of it! No saloon open in Glenwyn for one year, anyway."

"Amen!" responded the others.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### *KATHIE'S TWO DECISIONS.*

ONE bright day in October, Kathie sat by her open window, reading a letter she had received from Faye a week before. Part of it was as follows:

"I cannot tell you how glad I am that Lloyd accepted this call. Denning is the most charming little town imaginable. We have been here just eight months, and I feel as much at home as if I had been here all my life. I'm infatuated with the place, but disappointed in the people. They don't seem at all as you described them. Of course, there are a few exceptions; but the majority seem cold and indifferent. If they only knew how much I longed for friendship, they would not be so distant. Yet I shrink from putting myself forward. I feel a little ashamed to confess it, but I've only had two callers since I came, Mrs. Lisle and Mrs. Amory, both of whom I like very much. Lloyd isn't



at all enthusiastic. I'm afraid he regrets having accepted the call. There seems to be a drought in the church just now, for there has not been a single conversion since he has been its pastor. He made a remark to-day that shocked me. 'Faye,' he said, 'I am afraid I have mistaken my calling. My preaching brings forth no fruit. I'm thoroughly discouraged.' I could go on and tell you of all I planned to do before I came here, and how little I have accomplished, but I am writing this time for a special purpose. I want you to spend this summer with me, and I shall not take 'no' for an answer. You must come. It's two years since I've seen you. Just think of it! Two whole years! I need you, Kathie. Come! We have named baby for you. She is a bright little darling, just four months old. She is looking up at me now, and cooing in her pretty way, as if she, too, echoed the cry of my heart, 'Come!'"

Kathie had read and re-read the letter every day that week, as if seeking help from it to bring her to a decision.

She had not seen her favorite cousin since her marriage, two years before, and she longed very

much to meet her. There was no reason that she could conceive of why she should not accept this invitation. Yet she was undecided.

The clock upon the mantel struck the half hour, causing her to look up. Half-past five! Where had the time gone? At six, Mr. Lythcombe was coming. He came very often of late, and Kathie always welcomed him gladly. She must make a final decision within the next half hour. Would she go to Denning, or remain at Glenwyn?

Another decision, too, she would be called upon to make; one that would bring joy to two lonely lives. She knew very well what the answer to that would be; she had settled it long since. But the first was the all important question to settle now. Could she put aside, for awhile, the new joy in which she was about to participate? Could she do it for the sake of duty? Was there a work to do at Denning, and had the Lord singled her out to do it? It seemed so.

Two years before, she had hailed the call joyfully; had planned work that would have reached even beyond these two years; but her

plans had come to naught. God had willed it otherwise, and she had not rebelled. Another—dear to her, it is true—was occupying the place that she was to have occupied; doing the work that she was to have done; going in and out among the people that were to have been hers. There had been a few hours of anguish at the bitterness of parting; but he who had afflicted poured his oil of healing upon the bleeding heart, and ‘peace like a river’ had flowed in. Kathie had been purified by affliction.

Kneeling by the open window, she breathed a short prayer for guidance; and as she arose, the answer came in three lines of a little hymn with which she had been familiar in childhood, but had not thought of for years:

Duty calls thee now away  
From the glad joys of to-day.  
Haste! The Master's call obey.

The question was decided at once. Kathie would go to Denning.

THE END.



